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This is a nation of husbands who have seen their wives executed and their children's hands chopped off



Alex Duval Smith, one of the few journalists in Sierra Leone since Freetown was invaded, hears the tales of horror from the victims of a senseless war

SPENT CARTRIDGES litter the entrance to Freetown's Connaught Hospital. They make a clinking sound as you walk inside, bodies litter the floor. Alive, or dying from machete or bullet wounds, the bodies groan.

Children call out "mamma" and women plead "sister" - the sight of a white woman denotes hope. And as I hold my pen to my notebook and look into a pair of pleading eyes, I realise that it is not a hand that is being held up to me, but a bloody bandaged stump on the end of a newly mutilated arm.

They arrived here by the truckload in the early hours of yesterday - children and women, mostly from the poor districts of eastern Freetown. They are the victims of retreating killers in a country that is high on the adrenaline of violence.

The Nigerian-led intervention force, Ecomog, has just re-taken most of the capital city from the Revolutionary United Front rebels, who are fighting to remove the democratic government of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah.

The rebels - they are known as such but are merely a ragbag of poisoned men - have been mutilating Sierra Leonean peasants for 18 months. But never until now have the citizens in Freetown been given the "long or short-sleeve" treatment - the choice of where your arm will be severed. The RUF knows only how to destroy, so as it seizes it destroys whatever it can.

Andrew Caulker, aged 29, from Wellington, eastern Freetown, lies on one of the Connaught's rare hospital tables, his head bandaged. "I am a Jehovah's Witness, perhaps that is why they put a machete in my head and my arm," he said.

No one here understands

what - apart from drugs and depravity - motivates the killers, many of them said to be children, to butcher their victims.

Mohammed Fofana, from Kissy, eastern Freetown, arrived with his four-year-old son, Abdul. "They came the day before yesterday. They killed my wife, Masiril Jabbie, by shooting her in the head and they shot Abdul in the thigh."

"Later they came back and burnt the house down. They said it was because we were supporters of Ecomog. I do not support anyone. I just want to save my life," said Mr Fofana.

Troops from Ecomog - the 15,000-strong West African intervention force - were bringing in injured people by the truckload yesterday as they secured pockets of eastern Freetown. Major Kaya Tanko, heading the Ecomog strike force, said: "We have secured 50 per cent of the eastern end of the city but our problem is the hills above Kissy. The rebels are hiding there. They come down at night to attack civilians and loot and burn their homes."

The Connaught Hospital yesterday received medical supplies - thought to be from a 3.3 tonne shipment from Britain - including saline drips, antibiotics and bandages.

Dr Jibao Sandy - one of 20 physicians treating the thousands of injured - said: "We need more of everything. We also need doctors. We are doing bullet extractions on the spot. We do not even have enough antibiotics and bandages. We have not slept for two days."

"For two weeks before that, we worked for the rebels, at gunpoint. When they invaded Freetown on 6 January, they killed all the existing patients to make room for their own injured," said Dr Sandy.

In this sick conflict, the world



Three brutally mutilated victims of Sierra Leone's civil war after being treated in hospital

Dave Guttenfelder

is standing by, and the Royal Navy frigate HMS *Norfolk*, moored in Aberdeen Bay, is the most visible example.

The Royal Marines come ashore from time to time to assess what is going on in this diamond-rich former British colony. But they have decided to let Nigeria, aided by white mercenaries and the pro-Kabbah Kamajor militia, "finish the job" of flushing the rebels out of Freetown.

"Normally, in war, you give the enemy an escape route," a Royal Marine commando ob-

served yesterday. "The Nigerians are not doing that," he added with apparent approval.

Today, a transport plane from the Department for International Development is due to arrive in Lungi, north of Freetown, with a cargo of unspecified aid.

What is not needed, despite reports to the contrary, is food. Rice and greens are on sale in the streets of Freetown. Even fish is returning - despite an Ecomog ban imposed due to fears of rebel arms shipments.

What is needed, however, is

medicine and surgeons. Most of the world's charities, including the Red Cross and Médecins Sans Frontières have fallen out with Ecomog after it accused them of lending communications equipment to the rebels. There are no foreign doctors in town and the British shipment of medical supplies appears to have been virtually unused.

Most of all though, Sierra Leone needs the world to remember - for a long time to come - that this is a nation of husbands who have seen their

wives executed in front of them and their children's hands chopped off.

Two doors up from the Connaught, the nurses' school has been transformed into a mortuary or, rather, a body dump. It is full - 1,140 bodies had been delivered when the counting stopped four days ago.

Yesterday, by the door - amid an overwhelming stench of butchery - lay the bloated corpse of a headless man whose legs had been gnawed to the bone, presumably by dogs and vultures.

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Man arrested after girls found safe

BY KATE WATSON-SMYTH
AND ANDREW BUNCOMBE

tioned over possible abduction

Charlene, 10, gave her father a big hug when they were reunited. Keith Lunnon, a drugs counsellor, said: "The atmosphere in our house has turned from tension to happiness in a matter of minutes."

Lisa's parents did not comment, but her grandparents were thrilled. Bernard Deering, 52, said it was "perfect". "When I see her I am going to give her

a bloody great cuddle," he said. His wife, Patricia, 56, clutching two bottles of champagne, added: "I will never let her out of my sight again. We were really beginning to despair."

Exactly what happened to the girls during their time away was unclear last night, but there were strong suggestions that they were held against their will for at least part of that time.

Mr Lunnon said his daughter had been able to watch the appeals he and his wife had been making on her behalf. She

had told him that when the girls woke up yesterday, Lisa had been crying. "She saw us on the television," he said. "She knew exactly the scale of the search."

Despite her ordeal, he said his daughter had been remarkably well. "She was quite chirpy ... her usual chatty self talking about her hamster."

He declined to give further details about the children's time away from home, which sparked the biggest search in the history of the Sussex force.

Detective Superintendent

Jeremy Paine, who headed the investigation, said it was going to be a "long process of gathering evidence". The children will undergo medical checks and officers will talk to them over the next few days to establish what happened.

Det Supt Paine said: "I am ecstatic. Looking back at this morning, we were getting despondent, and I don't think any of us went to bed last night without that sinking feeling."

Charlene and Lisa vanished as they walked the short dis-

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Back to the safety of home after the ordeal that every parent dreads

CHARLENE LUNNON'S bedroom was like that of many 10-year-old girls all over the country. Posters of the Spice Girls and Leonardo DiCaprio adorned the walls, and her beloved hamster, Fluffy, was in a cage in the corner.

But a note on her pillow hinted at the anguish that her family had been going through since she disappeared on her way to school with her best friend, Lisa Hoodless, four days ago.

Hand-written by her sister Vanessa, it said simply: "We love you Charlene - always."

Yesterday her first concern was being reunited with her parents, Fluffy.

Her parents said that they talked of "superficial stuff", made up stories about how Charlene's animals had missed her.

The stuff they did not say - or chose not to talk about - is exactly what happened to the girls during their ordeal.

Even after they were found yesterday at midday, apparently by a policeman on the

BY KATE WATSON-SMYTH
AND ANDREW BUNCOMBE

beat, very few details were emerging about the three days that they had spent away from their families.

But details that did emerge hinted that the time had not been happy. Police said it was clear the girls had been through "an ordeal".

That ordeal started early on Tuesday morning, when Charlene and Lisa set off for school from the Lunnon family home in the south-coast town of Hastings.

It was only a 500-metre walk to Christ Church school - a short walk they had made many times before. And yet they never arrived.

No one at the school appeared to take much notice of their absence, and it was not until they failed to reappear at home that night that the alarm was raised. "When 4.45pm passed and when 5.30pm went, I knew that something was very, very wrong," said Charlene's stepmother, Philomena.

To add to their distress, they knew that their parents were worried out of their minds and desperately trying to find out where they were.

"Where she was she saw us on the television. She knew what we were saying to her," said Keith Lunnon.

"She knew exactly the scale of the search."

The hunt to find the two girls was the biggest in the history of Sussex Police.

Three hundred police officers, 50 Gurkhas from the Princess of Wales Own Regiment and scores of volunteers scoured Sussex for any trace of the missing girls. Between them, amid increasing anguish, they checked parkland and cliff tops near the girls' homes.

At the same time detectives in London followed up a number of possible sightings of the girls in the capital. There had been reported sightings in Bermondsey and Plumstead.

As the days passed, the fears of the girls' relatives and the police increased.

Yesterday morning Detective Superintendent Jeremy Paine, the man leading the hunt, said: "I'm very worried. I'm less confident and less hopeful that we are going to find these children alive and well, which makes us all very sad."

"However, none of us will give up hope. There is still the possibility that they are alive and well out there."

To those listening to his words it seemed that the police may already had accepted that the worst had happened. Thankfully, they were wrong.

The breakthrough came yesterday morning, when officers "using good police work" followed up a clue that led them to the girls.

Three minutes before midday they reported that two girls had been found in Hastings. Police thought that they were Charlene and Lisa, but it was unconfirmed.

In their home in St Leonards, Charlene's family learnt of the discovery moments later. They hugged.

"It is not confirmed but it is 99 per cent certain," Mr Lunnon said. "We are both chuffed."

Yesterday afternoon, with the news having sunk in, he was

able to describe the moment he was reunited with his little girl. "She ran right up to me and gave me a big hug. I said 'I love you'."

Mrs Lunnon, a drugs counsellor, said that he had been through "hell" over the past few days and was left with only "tiny bits of hope".

He had screamed with delight when he heard that the girls had been found safe and well.

Mr Lunnon continued: "She was actually quite chirpy, really. She was her usual chatty self, talking about her hamster."

"She said she missed us very much and I said we

missed her very much. I'm going to spend this evening with my wife and Charlene; that is my celebration."

Mrs Lunnon spoke of the moment when she was reunited with Charlene. She said: "I gave her a cuddle; I was just very relieved."

She said that at times she feared Charlene was dead.

"I did think sometimes, then I thought 'No, don't think about it, be positive,' and that is what I did."

At the news conference, Det Supt Paine confirmed that a 46-year-old man arrested in connection with the case was not related to the families.

MISSING GIRLS FOUND



Charlene Lunnon, 10, arriving at her home in Hastings yesterday. Right, fellow pupils of Charlene and Lisa Hoodless at Christ Church school yesterday. Reuters/PA



Map showing the locations of Hastings, St Leonards, and other towns along the South Coast. Insets show the surrounding counties of Herts, Essex, Greater London, Surrey, West Sussex, and East Sussex. Text boxes provide details about the girls' disappearance and their safe return.

Hunt was led by the South Coast murder specialist

BY JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

THE MAN who led the successful hunt for the two missing girls from Hastings is no stranger to the media limelight and high-profile cases.

Detective Superintendent Jeremy Paine was also the officer in charge of the hunt for the killer of Billie-Jo Jenkins, the 13-year-old battered to death in her garden in Hastings in February 1997. He was the officer who briefed the media in July last year after his officers helped to convict Sian Jenkins of murdering his foster-daughter.

Det Supt Paine was awarded a Chief Constable's commendation for his work in pulling together that difficult case. A month into the inquiry, he took a break to be with his wife, Helen, at the birth of their child, Harriet, who weighed in



Det Supt Jeremy Paine, who has worked on a string of complex murder cases on the south coast PA

at 7lbs. Three hours later he was back on the murder trail.

He was educated at Imberhoe School, East Grinstead, Sussex, and joined Sussex

Police in 1979 as a constable. He has worked his way up the ranks, gaining the respect of colleagues for his intelligence and hard work. He has served

in October last year he took charge of the investigation into the shooting death of Tony Robinson, 61, found in his camper van in Hove. A man has been charged with the murder.

The next month, he led the inquiry into the death of Michael Furnival, 34, found dead at his flat in Queensway, Brighton. A man has been charged with this murder.

Det Supt Paine worked on the successful inquiries in Crawley into the 1996 murder of Janet Haze, and Sujad Khan, killed in 1995. He is still investigating the fire deaths of two women in Hastings.

Teachers must tell parents 'as soon as children go missing'

BY BEN RUSSELL
Education Correspondent

guideline, published as part of a £55m programme to cut truancy, said a policy of contacting parents was "strongly recommended" as a way of preventing problems.

But teachers' leaders warned the changes would be difficult to enforce.

Margaret Morrissey, spokesman for the National Federation of Head Teachers, said most staff followed up absences the day after children had failed to arrive, and staff would be "extremely concerned" at the change.

He said: "It is not unusual

for a school to wait for a sick note if a child does not come in. It is also not unusual for two friends to be off, because they are likely to get a cold at the same time."

"The first onus is on parents

to call in if their children are sick, but if they do not, schools

should phone home. At the end of the day if you are a small school and have only a few children off it is better for the head to take five minutes out of class to make sure the children are safe."

"Many schools say that if a child is not in school by 9.30am they will call the parents. That's a very good idea," Ms Morrissey added.

Today's habitual truant will be tomorrow's criminal unless we act decisively now.

"We must crack down on truancy and classroom delinquency."

The guidance we are issuing today for consultation shows teachers what is successful in improving pupil behaviour and attendance, how to prevent avoidable exclusions and how to provide an education for children who have been excluded."

The guidelines, which strengthen previous advice to teachers, come after it was revealed that the parents of Lisa Hoodless and Charlene Lunnon did not know the girls were missing until they failed to return home at the usual time. The school did not contact them straight away, even though the children had no history of truancy.

Under the new guidelines

school staff should contact parents "wherever possible". The

American Association: How to live longer, be happier and avoid Marilyn Monroe syndrome. Reports by Steve Connor

The diet that can put years on your life

AGEING

A SCIENTIST who spent two years locked away in a giant experimental glasshouse in the Arizona desert said he has found evidence to support the theory that a carefully restricted diet might extend human life.

Roy Walford, professor of pathology at the University of California at Los Angeles and a pioneer of "caloric restriction" - the idea that a strict diet can counter the effects of ageing - said he has the first data to suggest it might work in humans.

Professor Walford was one of the eight men and women who took part in the Biosphere 2 experiment between 1991 and 1993, living in a sealed environment as a test for future colonisation of the Moon or Mars. During the two years they ate a controlled diet rich in nutrients but low on high-calorie food.

An analysis of blood samples taken during the experiment has found the same changes in certain biological markers seen when lab animals are forced to undergo a calorie-restricted diet.

Experiments on mice and rats demonstrate that a severely

restricted diet, when calorie intake is reduced by up to half, results in a significantly extended lifespan. The longevity of one strain of mouse went from 38 to 56 months - equivalent in human terms to living 120 years.

The Biosphere 2 study suggests that severe calorie restriction does not undermine health, as long as people receive adequate nutrition. Rather, a low-calorie diet may significantly enhance health by reducing certain risk factors, such as high blood pressure and cholesterol," Professor Walford said.

"Biosphere 2 proved that people on a restricted calorie intake can perform well physically and intellectually, even for two years in a challenging environment."

Rats on a calorie-restricted diet are generally more active but they are not as interested in sex, although they remain fertile longer. "They are not as sexy but they are sexy for longer," Professor Walford said.

Professor Walford, who was the medical physician on the project, told the American Association for the Advancement of Science meeting in Los Angeles that experiments on monkeys have produced similar results. "The diet inside

Marilyn Monroe in 'Some Like it Hot', in which she proved a nightmare to direct



Marilyn Monroe in 'Some Like it Hot', in which she proved a nightmare to direct

All bit-part actors to be just bytes

COMPUTING

THE ACTOR who never forgets the script and takes direction without question has been the dream of film directors since Marilyn Monroe enraged Billy Wilder by repeatedly shuffling lines in *Some Like it Hot*.

Now scientists are developing computer-generated characters that can respond to a director's whims, according to a leading researcher in the Walt Disney Imagineering company.

Traditionally, the movements and script of animated characters, like the stars of *Toy Story*, have had to be carefully choreographed. But advances in computerised animation will soon enable a director to deal with a cartoon in the same way as an actor.

Eric Haseltine, head of Imagineering's research and development, foresees a future where entire film sets and minor actors are computer generated, leaving only the main characters to be played by the real thing.

He demonstrated what could be done with Marge the dinosaur and Monty the professor, two computer-generated actors who can adapt their expressions and script according to what they hear. They are the forerunners of a much

more sophisticated actor produced by computer software, said Mr Haseltine.

"I'm going to talk to the character, it's going to listen to what I say and it's going to be have differently based on what it understands I said. It has the capacity to amend a basic set of outputs based on what it perceives to be the inputs."

He said computerised actors have already been used in certain films. "For example in some of the opening scenes in *Titanic*, where there is a long shot on the boat and you see some characters walking on the decks, those are all computer-generated characters."

"So it is already being done. How much more it will be done, I don't know. There is always going to be a push to use technology and to tell stories in different ways," he said.

Just like Monroe, however, there will be limits to a future actor's ability. The computer-generated version will not have the depth of perception of a Laurence Olivier or a John Gielgud, but it will nevertheless be a quite different creature to Mickey Mouse or Donald Duck.

Corals being killed off by fungus disease

BIOLOGY

THE CURRENT decimation of the coral reefs is being caused by a fungus, normally only found on land, which is being washed out to sea by soil erosion.

Scientists have studied the "bleaching" of reefs in the Florida Keys in the US and found that the fan-shaped corals are being attacked, causing lesions, tumours and eventually death.

Drew Harvell, associate professor of ecology at Cornell University, told the meeting that the death of hundred-year-old corals from diseases that they would have normally survived could be an early warning of far more serious problems for the global environment. "When we see corals

out by rivers flowing through intensively farmed agricultural land.

The fungus collects on the flexible, fan-shaped surfaces of the coral and causes an infection which first discolors the reefs and eventually kills them. The scientists believe sea fans, which position themselves perpendicularly to water currents to filter feed, are especially vulnerable to any disease-causing microbe.

Kirk Kim, a post-doctoral research associate at Cornell, said there is a growing consensus that the ocean ecosystems are now being degraded to such an extent that they are becoming havens for new infectious diseases.

Bad news for workaholics

WORK

HIGH-FLERS who yearn to work fewer hours but fear damaging their career prospects can take heart from a study showing that professionals who work part-time still managed to get promoted.

A study of 87 senior executives from 45 companies who took a deliberate decision to put in less time at the office has exposed the myth that working fewer hours will damage promotion prospects, according to scientists from Purdue Uni-

families and were paid between 50 per cent and 80 per cent less than their full-time salary by working on average 18 hours a week, compared to 50 or 60 hours when full-time.

More than nine out of ten said they were happier and more satisfied with the balance between work and home as a result of working less; only 10 per cent said they planned to return to full-time work within the next three years.

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Masons appeal for new recruits

BY IAN BURRELL
Home Affairs Correspondent

cially in the professions and management, find they have less spare time and there are far more distractions to fill that time."

He said other "membership organisations" including the Independent Order of Oddfellows, were experiencing similar problems. Mr Hamill pointed out that no newspaper advertisement had been placed before, although some lodges had advertised in regimental or school magazines, if they drew the bulk of their members from such institutions.

The newspaper adverts might catch on, he said, if they were successful, but some masons would frown on the exercise, believing that a prospective Mason should not be pressured but should apply to join of his own volition.

Masonry enjoyed a boom in membership immediately after the Second World War when many men were looking for "greater stability" in their lives, said Mr Hamill. Natural causes meant that some of these members were now being lost.

Others left the craft after last year's Home Affairs Select Committee inquiry into Freemasonry led to calls for membership lists to be made public.

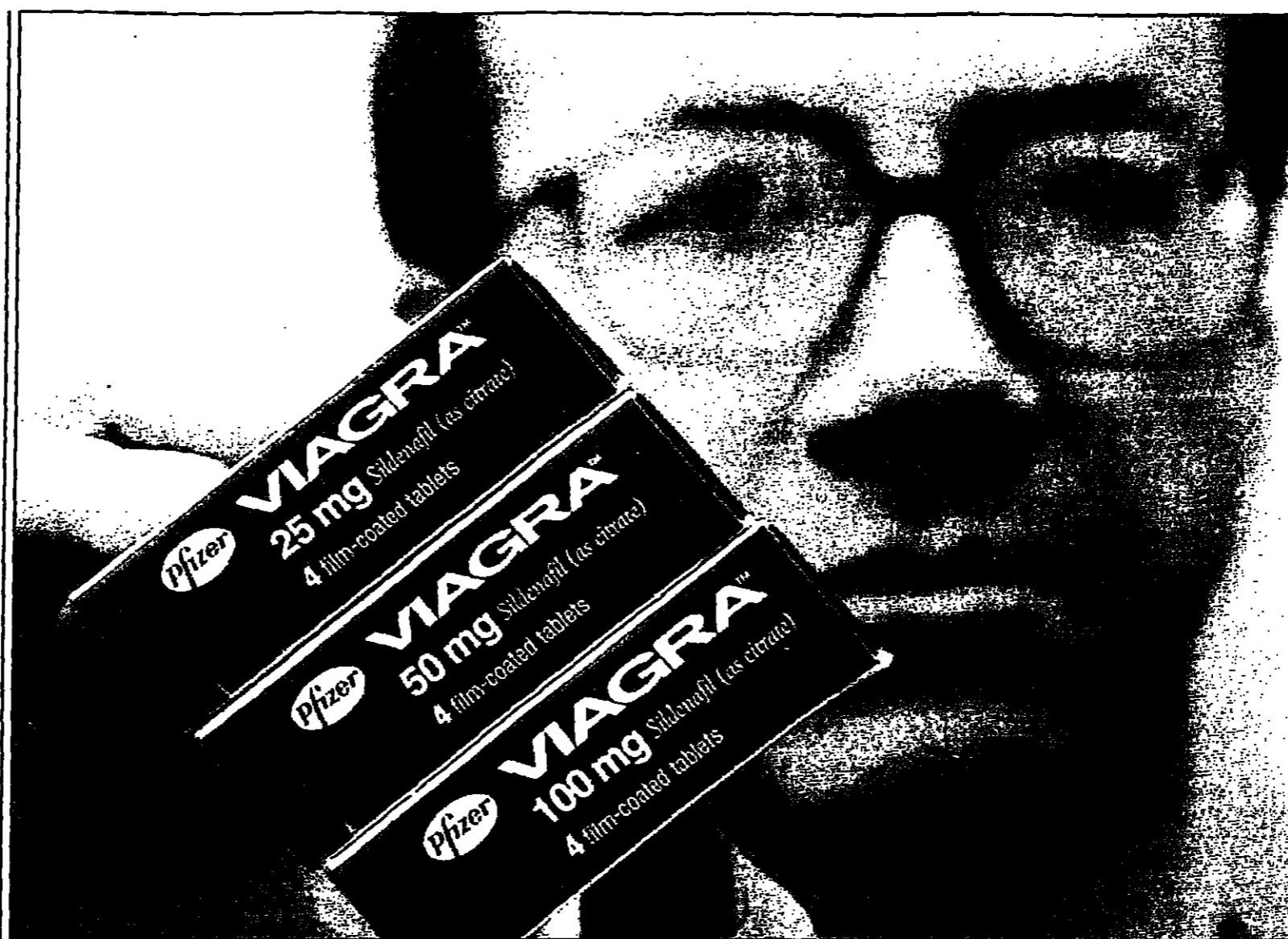
Some Masons felt their career prospects could be harmed because of the suspicion of Freemasonry that remains in some sections of society.

A lodge must have a minimum of seven men to perform its ancient ceremonies. A master, senior and junior warden, treasurer, secretary and two deacons are required for the secret rituals, which involve wearing ceremonial garb including aprons and white gloves.

Alan Garnett, provincial secretary for East Lancashire, said: "Membership is also dwindling in the church, Round Table and Rotary."

John Hamill, of the United Grand Lodge, said membership levels had been affected by the changes in British working patterns over the past 15 years.

He added: "People, especially



Dr Jonathan Reggler, at his surgery in Marlow, Buckinghamshire, says he thinks the BMA guidelines are 'spot-on' Stefan Rousseau/PA

GP told to foot bill for Viagra

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

which would limit Viagra, on the NHS, to a small group of severely disabled men.

Dr Jonathan Reggler, a GP at the Vine House Health Centre in Abbots Langley, Hertfordshire, has been told by West Hertfordshire health authority that the cost of two NHS prescriptions he wrote for a patient last October and November will be deducted from his pay.

The threat emerged the day after the British Medical Association defied the Government by urging GPs to prescribe the drug on the NHS to any patients who needed it. The BMA rejected proposed guidelines from Frank Dobson, the Secretary of State for Health,

president, said rationing was inevitable in a cash-limited system and the guidelines reflected that. In a clear criticism of the BMA's stance, he said: "Those promoting Viagra for all should ask themselves what services should be withdrawn and which patients should not be treated in order to pay for it."

At least two GPs are known to have been threatened by West Hertfordshire health authority for prescribing Viagra on the NHS. Dr Simmonds said he agreed to issue an NHS prescription after his patient paid for one pill privately and found that it worked. He said: "He had seen specialists and tried all the other treatments and although they worked at first they had ceased to be effective."

Dr Simmonds issued two NHS prescriptions for four tablets each to the man between October and November last year. On Christmas Eve he received a letter from the health authority telling him that the cost of the drugs, plus the chemist's dispensing cost, would be deducted from his income - a total of about £50.

"Not only was I within my rights to prescribe but, if there is a clinical need, I am obliged by my terms of service to do so," Dr Simmonds said.

Viagra was licensed in the UK last September and the Government issued advice to GPs not to prescribe it on the NHS, other than in "exceptional circumstances," pending official guidelines which were published on Thursday. These propose that NHS prescriptions be

restricted to a small group with severe disabilities, estimated at 15 per cent of all suffering from impotence.

Dr Simmonds has sought legal advice from his defence body, the Medical Protection Society. He said the Government's "advice" did not amount to a ban, and in the absence of a ban the advice was overridden by his duty to prescribe to any patient with a clinical need.

"Viagra is cheaper than the other treatments for impotence and to prescribe it for this man seemed cost-effective and clinically reasonable. I discussed it with my partners and they agreed," said Dr Simmonds.

Pfizer, the manufacturer, said West Hertfordshire was the only health authority it knew of to have issued such threats.

Slice of Sixties sells for £10m

BY CATHY COMERFORD

A MODEL AGENCY born out of the exuberance of the swinging Sixties has been sold for more than £10m by the two women who set it up on a \$1,000 loan.

Models 1, now a world renowned business with Yasminle Bon, Patsy Kensit, Jerry Hall, and more recently daughter Elizabeth, to its name, has come far from its humble but essentially hip beginnings.

Jose Fonseca and April Ducksbury met after they both left their previous jobs with only vague plans for the future. Ms Ducksbury had worked for the photographer David Anthony but left after a row to set up her own business.

At the same time, a sharp-eyed booker whom she had spoken to at London-based English Boy had the same idea. Models Marisa Berenson, Ingrid Boulting and Susan Murray finally persuaded Ms Fonseca to move, promising to go with her.

The two never looked back and have run the agency, based in Fulham, since its birth in Ms Fonseca's Chelsea basement flat in 1968. When, within four months, they had recouped the \$1,000 and more, they moved into the Fulham Road.

Now, 30 years later, the two directors who have remained business partners ever since have decided to sell up and make way for new blood.

The agency, which also manages more Nineties names such as Erin O'Connor and Karen Elson, has been sold to its senior managers, Karen Diamond and Kathy Pryer.

Though the agency's PR company refused to confirm its sale price, speculation put it at a more than £10m. Now based in the King's Road, it has 1,000 male and female models on its books and employs 30 staff who deal with designers such as Calvin Klein, Cerruti and Paul Smith.

The secret of the agency's success appears to be in its holistic approach to the models, treating them as having careers that needed to be managed rather than bodies to match up with bookings.

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Homage to a prospering Catalonia

THERE SOMETIMES comes a point on an unfamiliar aeroplane journey when, at a window seat, a passenger can feel like God. The plane descends through the cloud cover towards a distant runway. The clouds part. Patches of the Earth's surface appear. First a glassy sea ridged with frozen waves and dotted with a few model ships; then a coast, and a miniature train running down the coast; lower now, a ribbon of road with insect-cars crawling along it; lower still, scrubby fields, some kind of farmhouse, flat new factories, a tiny man on a tiny bicycle pedalling somewhere. For a minute or two, it seems like a world you have created. Then you realise it has all been going on without you - without so much as a by-yourself leave - this natural and human activity in yet another part of the world which, until now, has just been a word on a page or a postcard.

Of course, Barcelona shouldn't be like that for me or most other people in Europe. There is plenty to flesh out the idea of it. In 1992, it hosted the Olympic Games: weeks of television pictures, that melodramatic siren song by Freddie Mercury and Montserrat Caballe. The city's football team is famous.

We know about the buildings of Antoni Gaudí. Since the late Eighties, it has been a favourite destination for writers about architecture and design. A fashionable place, in other words. And I have been here before, in the early 1970s, when on the way home from a story about British tourists on the Costa Brava I stopped overnight in a grand hotel and was humbled by its formality and hauteur. That was in Franco's Spain, when Glasgow football hooligans (the infection had yet to spread to England) were locked up in Franco's jails (the implication being unjustly) and the country stood out of step with the rest of western Europe as a symbol of economic backwardness, repression and religiosity.

All changed utterly. Britain is now Europe's exceptional country. This week, after only a few minutes on the streets of Barcelona, it struck me (as it must have struck thousands of others) that the city was a wonderful advertisement for the European ideal. Handsome, restored, prosperous, clean, free and, by British standards, cheap. Has there been a debate about Europe or the euro in Spain? Not for a minute. My host in Barcelona, the writer and publisher Enrique Murillo, said he rather admired the British for having the argument, but

NOTEBOOK



IAN JACK

in Spain it was simply unthinkable. Europe was the instrument by which Spain had achieved democracy and modernity. Later he put it another way: "People in Spain think that the Germans should go on subsidising them until they are as rich as the Germans."

We were lunching in a sparkling restaurant. A waiter approached with plates of delicious hake on beds of grilled artichoke. Outside the sun shone from a blue sky and oranges grew on trees.

AS THE capital of Catalonia, Barcelona is a good place to consider the Scottish question. The new building for the Scottish parliament in Edinburgh has been designed by Catalan architects, and that may not be coincidence.

Catalonia is to Madrid what Scotland will soon be to London: a semi-autonomous province within a kingdom that is no longer quite so united (Spain also has its equivalent of Northern Ireland in the Basque country, and to some extent of Wales in Galicia). Catalonia, like Scotland, prides itself on its different history. The two places contain similar numbers of people. Catalonia is governed by a nationalist, "business-first" party, just as Scotland will be if the SNP comes to power.

The prognosis for London and Madrid, the capitals of the old nation states, does not look good. They're losing power in two directions: upwards to Brussels (currency, taxation, defence, foreign policy) and downwards to Barcelona and Edinburgh (everything else).

In these terms the argument for complete independence inside Europe - a new Europe, of "the regions" rather than nation states - seems perfectly rational. Why bother with this superfluous layer of government, which dates from an older order? Why not deal, in Scotland or Catalonia, with Brussels direct?

Catalonia was granted the equiv-



People enjoying life at a beachside bar in Barcelona. The city is a wonderful advertisement for the European ideal

Michelangelo Durazzo

alent of Scottish devolution soon after Franco's death and the nationalists have ruled it ever since, but separation from Spain still seems improbable. Or at least - this is a judgement based on only a few conversations - not one that I heard seriously discussed. I went to supper with a few Catalans and non-Catalans.

There was what you might call good-natured joshing. Catalans were pragmatic, they liked to count their cash; they could accommodate Castilian arrogance.

They were Catalans first, Spanish second, Europeans third. Few nationalists in Scotland would so happily relish the same kind of elevation - "British" there is the missing word.

Then the waiter came with a bottle of cava and lemon sorbet with a sprig of basil on top.

ONE OBSTACLE to the separatist cause might be lack of grievance: a city so apparently prosperous, with such an enviable middle-class way of life, doesn't seem to have much to beef about. Another could be language. People in Catalonia are bilingual in Catalan and Castilian but Catalan is the official language, the medium of instruction in every state school and an essential for any government job. This is a much thicker layer of difference between Catalonia and the rest of Spain than any which exists between Scotland and England and therefore it would be easy to conclude - a help rather than hindrance - the cause of independence.

On the other hand, somewhere between a quarter and a third of Catalonia's 6 million population are first, second or third-generation immigrants from other parts of

Spain. Linguistic nationalism, especially of a language unread and unspoken in any other part of the world, holds no appeal for them. It complicates their life.

Those who can afford to do so

take their children out of the state system and send them to schools where Castilian Spanish and sometimes English is the medium from the age of five.

Small nationalisms imply homogeneity, but they can be just as divisive as large ones and sometimes even more so.

I left with a new thought: that if Catalans were less different to the rest of Spain, popular ambition for its independence might be broader and stronger. Scotland, despite the fantasies of the Gaelic and Braids Scots lobbies, will never have this problem. Linguistic Welsh nationalism certainly does.

But even to be poor in Europe

has its advantages. The train fare to the airport from Barcelona came to £1.50; Heathrow to central London is perhaps double the distance, but more than six times the fare (£10 for the 15-minute trip to Paddington, or £15 first-class). Immediately, at Heathrow, one difference between Britain and the rest of Europe is obvious. The Hugo Bosses are making their way to the fine new trains. The less well-off are heading for the Tube and a fare of £3.30. Welcome to a country of great divisions. It pays its chief executives the second-highest salaries in the world after the United States and can't make the Northern Line work.

A conundrum. Britain is among the poorer countries of Europe - but also the most expensive. Its people work longer hours than continental Europeans - but are also paid less. Can anyone explain it?

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Canny consumers outsmart the stores as high streets run into hard times

BY NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

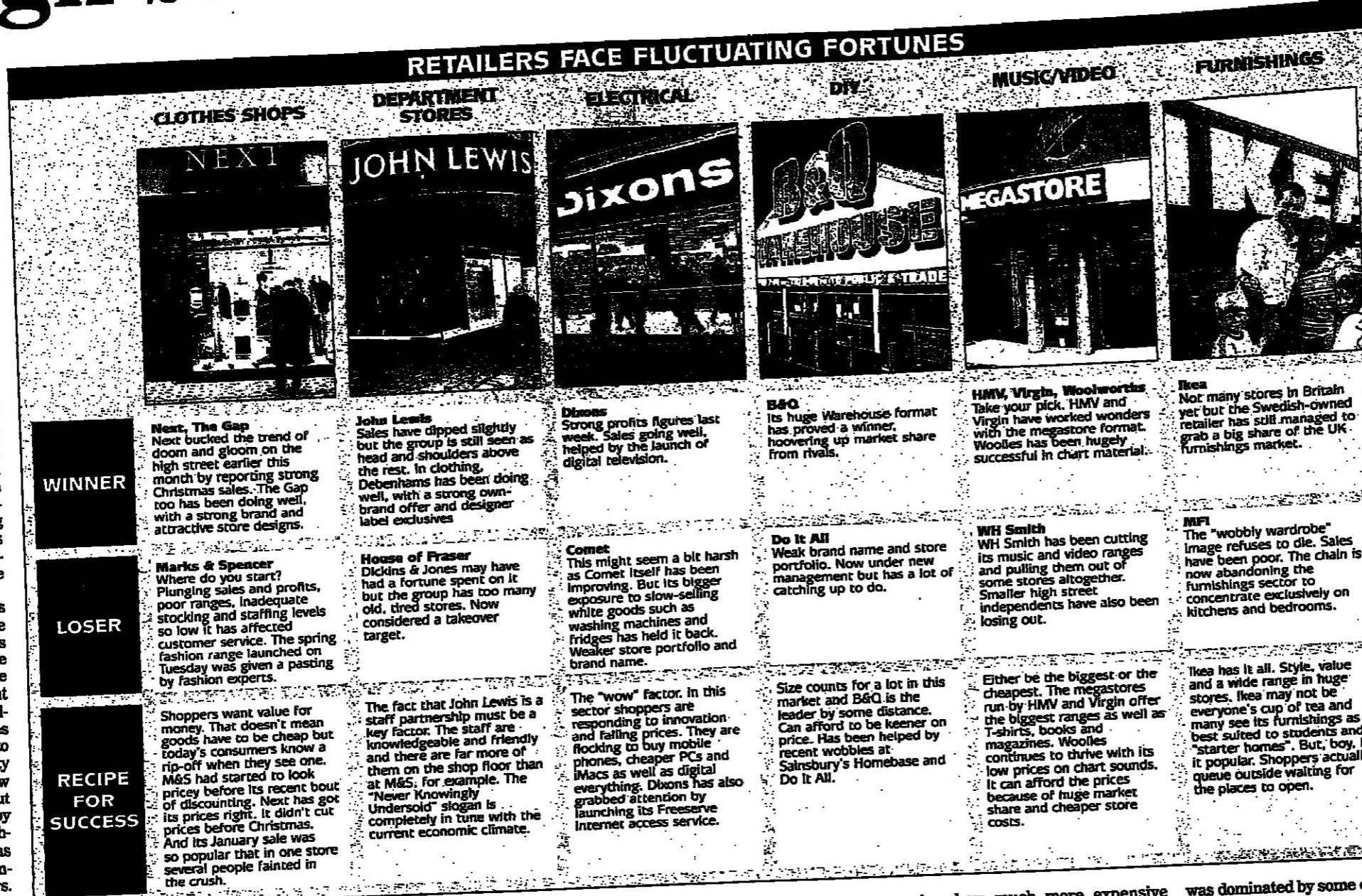
WELCOME TO the bargain zone. Today marks the last weekend of most retailers' January sales and shopkeepers are now desperate to offload seasonal stock whatever the discount.

Some of Britain's most prominent stores groups have been advertising "best ever" offers all week. House of Fraser is cutting an extra 20 per cent off some menswear, women's wear and household items at its department stores. Laura Ashley is frantically advertising a "Blue Cross" sale with 20 per cent off sale clothing and home furnishings. Even stodgy old Savile Row tailor Gieves & Hawkes has been dragged into the unseemly, last-minute discount business. It is advertising a further 15 per cent off all sales stock with the upper-class reminder: "One knows when time is running out".

You've guessed it - it has been another dire week on the high street. Official figures showed that retail sales in the run-up to Christmas were among the weakest in recent years. And there is grim trading news from a string of stores groups. Struggling M&S tried to garner some positive publicity with the launch of its new spring clothing collection, but found it roundly rubbished by the fashion experts. Laura Ashley reported a slump in sales as did Moss Bros, Aldays, Thorntons, Body Shop and Hamleys. This followed the calamitous profits warning from M&S only last week.

The slump is so severe that many retail experts are at a loss to explain it. The regular refrain from the high street is that sales are weak because of slumping consumer confidence. That seems obvious, but economists point out that employment is growing, real wages are rising and that the savings ratio is far higher now than it was at the start of the last recession, when consumers had built up huge credit card bills.

A survey this week showed that confidence had actually



improved since Christmas and that people feel far more upbeat about their personal finances.

According to Richard Hyman, head of Verdict, the retail consultancy, a gap has emerged between consumer confidence and their behaviour. People may feel slightly more optimistic, but due to job fears and other insecurities they are squelching money away "just in case".

Steve Bell, economist at Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, a City investment bank, points to two other factors. He says there

has been an absence of one-off benefits such as building society windfalls and energy bill credits, which came from the National Grid stock market introduction in 1997.

He also says the introduction of self-assessment income tax forms by the Inland Revenue could have had an impact. He points out that the new scheme has both widened the net of income tax - forcing more people to pay - and shortened the time lag between earning the income and paying the tax.

In some ways British retail-

ers have contributed to their own problems by a lack of innovation, inefficiency and over-expansion. There have been sectors where new products have caught the public's imagination such as mobile phones, personal computers and digital cameras. But this could be explained, at least in part, by a sharp fall in prices for these products, making them available to a far wider audience.

PCs for example, can now be bought for less than £600 compared with £1,200 a year ago.

Elsewhere, in clothing and

home furnishings, for example, there has been no discernible trend that has caught the eye and created a "must have" buzz. Even designer retailers such as Paul Smith have been left with racks of unsold suits.

Service in UK retailing is still poor. M&S has admitted recently that it has too few staff on the shop floor. In some other shops it can be hard to find anyone at a till to enable customers to pay.

Consumers have become wary of "rip-off" pricing. They have read the headlines about

perhaps the last recession is still casting its shadow. In

the 1990s boom, the high street

was dominated by some of the most colourful entrepreneurs of recent decades. There was George Davies at Next, Sir Terence Conran at Habitat and Gerald Ratner at the jewellery chain. They created new businesses and generated excitement. The last recession forced those people out of their companies as they over-extended themselves and ran into financial trouble.

Now many retailers groups are run by safe, solid accountants. They may make fewer mistakes but they take fewer

risks. The result, some say, is a lack of inspiration - too many shops looking too similar and selling indistinguishable goods at uncompetitive prices.

As Nathan Cockrell, retail analyst at BT Alex Brown, says: "A little while ago Next was criticised for stocking too many 'fashion' items and not enough classics. They have put that right and their share price is rising. But in many ways they were trying to do the right thing last year. Fashion should be about taking risks."

There are longer-term trends at work too. One is the gradual shift towards buying fewer consumer goods and more services instead. The proportion of household expenditure spent on services has risen from 9 per cent to 12 per cent between 1991 and last year in the same period, spending on clothing and footwear has fallen.

One forecaster says: "To put it crudely, we already own a lot of things. So we are finding other ways to spend our money, on things like foreign holidays, trips to the gym or a meal in a restaurant."

A shift in buying psychology is also important. After years of shopping with an inflationary mind-set - "I must buy it now or the price will go up" - consumers are now happy to wait because prices may actually fall. This has been a key reason for the sharp fall in sales of so-called big ticket items such as carpets and furniture as people defer purchases in the hope of a bargain.

In services the picture is different. Prices of haircuts and restaurant meals are holding up. This is partly because the wage component of services is far higher than in manufacturing where price deflation has become endemic.

When will the doom and gloom end? In the summer, experts say. By then interest rates should have been cut to a level that will kick-start the economy once more. It will be a relief to Britain's shopkeepers, who have lurched through one of the toughest environments they can remember.

Mu pre pro

THIS MORNING the II of the International Olympic Committee's executive committee behind closed doors at Lac Leman in St. Moritz, the 79-year-old Juan Antonio Samaranch, president of the Olympic

This august body has

to hear explanations from

members involved in the

surrounding the award o

Winter Olympics to Salt Lake City.

The IOC's own report

scandal, compiled in the

by its vice-president, Richa

s is said to recommend disclo

ation including expulsion of

members. Pound, a Cana

there is solid, irrefutable

that IOC members or their

received cash, gifts or t

from Salt Lake Olympic or

some cases more than

£60,000.

On Saturday night, the IOC

on their fates. Whatever t

decision it will cap what has

most remarkable six wee

history of the Olympic mo

Mor, usually known as

the Mormon religion. Salt I

has been reeling over the al

that officials from its bid Co

used expensive gifts and se

sueade the IOC to hold the C

Utah "Incentives", includin

and athletic scholarships

of IOC members, free

insurance and other gifts ar

have been used to try to c

particular race. On America

Olympic corruption story h

running second only to the

impeachment.

Those accused includ

Claude Ganga, a 64-year-

member. In the run up to t

bidding, a former

ambassador from the Congo,

it has made \$60,000 profit or

deal in Utah arranged by

ber of the Salt Lake bid com

The organisers also gav

\$100 to help feed childre

war torn Homeland, and pu

reports have linked Ganga t

to Salt Lake City. He and his mother also re

medical care paid for by th

mittee.

Another in the frame is

Mohammed Attarabulsi, t

year-old IOC member from

his son. Subhi admits that

paid tuition at Brigham

University and other Utah s

\$1,500 a month for expense

both the Salt Lake bid and o

ing committees. At least Att

did the decent thing yesterd

Record £500m payout is agreed for injured miners

BY BARRIE CLEMENT
Labour Editor

A RECORD £500m compensation deal was agreed yesterday for former miners who lost the full use of their hands through industrial injury, with the prospect of three times that amount to go to those who contracted lung disease.

A leading lawyer in the case, which has lasted eight years, said senior managers at the now defunct British Coal should "hang their heads in shame for what they did" to their employees.

Yesterday's agreement - which involves payments of between £500m and £100m for most of the 40,000 sufferers - represents the highest compensation award so far against a single employer.

The deal agreed at the High Court in Manchester for former pitmen afflicted by "vibration white finger" paves the way for a wave of claims later this year for a much bigger settlement due for miners suffering serious chest complaints.

Lawyers calculate that the Government has set aside

months. "At long last the compensation will be agreed and the men suffering from these diseases will begin to receive payment soon," he said.

The legal action that resulted in yesterday's settlement began in 1991 against the former British Coal. Dave Guy, Durham area president of the National Union of Mineworkers, accused both British Coal and the Department of Trade and Industry of delaying tactics: "They must be condemned for dragging things out so long," he said.

The Energy minister, John Battle, welcomed the deal and said it would pave the way for the settlement of cases involving lung disease. He announced the establishment of 10 testing centres in former coalfield areas to assess damage to injured miners.

His department estimated that a 54-year-old man with moderate disability would receive £5,000, while someone under 45 with severe problems would come within the next few



John Battle: Lung disease settlement next on agenda

Coal should hang their heads in shame for what they did."

Vibration white finger affects blood circulation and hand function. Sufferers find it hard to pick up small objects or undo buttons. Some have had fingers amputated.

Andrew Tucker of the Irwin Mitchell law firm, predicted that a settlement for former pit workers with lung complaints would come within the next few

months. "The hearings exposed the abuse of patients".

Announcing an action plan to improve mental health services for older people, the head of the health trust responsible apologised "unreservedly" yesterday to the patients and their families.

Dr Usman Khan, chair of Camden and Islington Community Health Services NHS Trust, said it had already begun to put into practice the lessons learnt from the internal inquiry, which produced 61 recommendations.

Among them is a proposal that staff working with the vulnerable elderly should be checked, as is the case with children. The report also called for

a review of the disciplinary process. "The hearings exposed the way in which the regime of care at Beech House was largely and deliberately hidden from the relatives of residents, other clinicians and service managers," it said.

The report noted that what occurred at Beech House did not reflect the way in which care was provided to other patients at St Pancras.

A spokesman for the charity Help the Aged said it feared

there were many more such cases in NHS hospitals.

"The Government must take

immediate action to make sure

that hospitals monitor and

improve their standards of care

of the elderly."

Nurses bullied elderly patients

BY LOUISE JURY

A POWERFUL CLIQUE of nurses threatened, abused and neglected elderly patients in a specialist geriatric ward at St Pancras Hospital in north London for three years up to 1996.

An inquiry found that patients were hit in the face, kicked, wrongly restrained, bathed in cold water and regularly deprived of fluids. One resident was tied up and locked in his room and a female nursing assistant told another patient: "I'll break your neck."

The hospital's trust is now recommending that staff who work with the elderly be vetted in the same way as those working with children.

An internal inquiry into the mistreatment found that at

perpetrated or knowingly sup-

ported the abuse of patients".

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there were many more such cases in NHS hospitals.

"The Government must take

Knoydart bereft by exit of saviour

EARLIER THIS week, when the bid by Sir Cameron Mackintosh to be the saviour of Knoydart fell through, he was said to be "close to tears". He would not have been the first to weep over this wildly beautiful Scottish peninsula.

Knoydart, an isolated finger on Scotland's west coast, has been a place of anguish since the 1850s when its population was cleared by Josephine MacDonnell of Glengarry and shipped to Nova Scotia. Its history is a litany of troubles, its future is unsure.

Fifty years ago the so-called Seven Men of Knoydart, returning from war service, staked claims to a few acres of their own. They were taken to court by the then owner, Nazi sympathiser Lord Brocket, and dispossessed. None of their descendants remains there.

Its most recent would-be saviour is Sir Cameron, who owns the neighbouring Nevis Estate. He was proposing to lease back the 17,000-acre es-

BY STEPHEN GOODWIN
Scotland Correspondent

tate to the 70 residents for an annual rent of just £1 and a bottle of malt whisky.

But the theatre impresario's sudden exit from negotiations, and the loss of his £650,000, have left the residents unsure of their future. On Wednesday, the community association relaunched its public appeal to fund a buy-out.

"The people of Knoydart are very aware that the outside world will be questioning why we seem to be looking a gift horse in the mouth," said the association members. But with Sir Cameron denying them a future right to buy and hiving off vital housing, the deal was "simply not acceptable".

The estate has become a cause célèbre in the land reform debate in Scotland. There may lie the residents' salvation.

They would love to see the Government step in with the extra £300,000 their Knoydart



Troubles beset the beautiful and remote Highland peninsula of Knoydart, which lies between the lochs of Heaven and Hell

Scottish Viewpoint

Foundation needs for a buy-out.

Knoydart lies between lochs Nevis (Heaven) and Hourn (Hell). The only settlement, Inverie, boasts one of Britain's most remote inns, a watering hole for hill-walkers bound for the peninsula's two munros - peaks over 3,000ft. Catering for visitors is the main source of income for the community.

The original 50,000-acre estate was broken up in sales in the 1850s by Philip Rhodes, an English property dealer. An

earlier owner was Lord Hesketh, one-time Tory minister, who bought it in 1972 for £250,000 and sold it the next year for £1.5m.

Today, the only natives of Knoydart are the handful of children born since settlers from afar began arriving in the 1970s and 80s. Bernie Everitt, 59, a former plumber from Kent, is the part-time postman and chairs the community association. He said: "It is quality of life that's important, and

freedom from the aggravations I used get as a plumber, even just finding a place to park. It's also the sense of community; next week on Burns Night we'll all be together, Scots, English, German, Dutch."

Fed up with neglect by absentee lairds, the settlers decided to go for a buy-out and the Knoydart Foundation was formed in 1997. It includes two wild land charities (the John Muir Trust and the Brasher Trust set up by the former

Olympic athlete Chris Brasher), the Highland Council and Sir Cameron's own charity, the Mackintosh Foundation.

Last November, Knoydart Peninsula Ltd, controlled by the businessman Stephen Hinchliffe, went into voluntary receivership with debts to the Bank of Scotland and others of £1.4m. The fraud squad has been investigating him over the failed retail chain Facia.

The receiver is looking for £250,000 for the estate. Sir

Cameron offered £650,000, the Brasher Trust adding a further £200,000, with £250,000 from the John Muir Trust and £100,000 from the public.

Highland councillor Charlie King, chairman of the foundation, said: "We all knew Sir Cameron and there was no malice intended. He wanted to make Knoydart safe for as long as anyone living there wanted. He was pretty upset."

Iain Bennet, the receiver in Glasgow, has to recoup as

much of the Bank of Scotland's money as he can. If it comes to a "fire sale", speculators could top the Knoydart Foundation's accumulated £550,000.

The Knoydart group has written to the receiver, asking for three weeks to raise the money. It believes Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, might consider a grant of £300,000 would place him in the pantheon of heroes with the Seven Men of Knoydart. And there's an election on 6 May.

Oil platforms should be left to rot at sea, says Bellamy

THE GOVERNMENT and Greenpeace were wrong to insist redundant oil platforms be brought back to land and recycled, David Bellamy said.

Professor Bellamy, Britain's best-known environmentalist, said there would be greater environmental benefit leaving them at sea. He added that the

BY NICHOLAS SCHOON

Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott had failed to answer letters in which he asked the Government to justify recycling.

Professor Bellamy's comments come two weeks before a treaty to ban dumping the structures in the North Sea and north-east Atlantic comes into force. Britain has signed.

At a treaty meeting in Portugal in July Mr Prescott agreed that all Britain's redundant platforms should be recycled. Professor Bellamy's

said comments come two weeks before a treaty to ban dumping the structures in the North Sea and north-east Atlantic comes into force. Britain has signed.

The professor said most scientists agreed that, provided toxic waste was removed, platforms would "gently rot away", doing no harm. They would boost marine life by adding iron, an important marine fertiliser to the sea. They had been left in the Gulf of Mexico because they form reefs where

fish congregate. Professor Bellamy says they could do the same off Britain, and could also demarcate "no-fishing" zones in the over-exploited North Sea, since trawlers stayed away for fear of snagging nets.

A halt to recycling could

also save money. The Government says it will cost £10bn to bring the 250 platforms in British waters back to shore and cut them up for scrap. Much of this will borne by taxpayers, because the owners can claim tax relief. Professor Bellamy said that if they were not recycled, there were better ways of spending the money

saved. Some should go on reducing over-fishing, compensating fishermen for scrapping boats or paying them to acquire less destructive nets.

A spokesman for Mr Prescott said the Environment Department had corresponded with Professor Bellamy. Recycling steel in the platforms

"had considerable environmental benefits."

A Greenpeace campaigner, Simon Reddy, condemned Professor Bellamy's argument. "This is ludicrous... if you allow oil companies to leave these structures you are telling industry... you can use the sea as a dumping-ground."

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A shaker, a stitch-up and a new stooge

THE ASHDOWN decision caught Westminster by surprise and immediately unleashed a torrent of parliamentary speculation.

Few observers could quite believe that Paddy had genuinely decided, before the 1997 general election, on an early-retirement plan. Members of Parliament always assume that there must be some dreadful hidden secret behind such a departure.

There was laughter in Committee Room 11 when the president of the Liberal Democrats, Baroness Mardon, told MPs of her first response when Paddy informed her of his intentions.

"Oh God. Oh well, it could have been worse."

In spite of protestations that Paddy is still in charge, contenders are already jockeying for position this weekend and the party's supposedly ever-deepening relationship with the Government is bound with Labour will be irresistible.

The temptation for most of the contenders for the leadership – apart from Menzies Campbell – to appeal to the huge section of party members opposed to deals with Labour will be irresistible.

The prospects for proportional representation for Westminster look grim – much to the relief of many in the Cabinet and most of Labour's backbenchers.

And what of action-man Paddy himself?

The prospect of retirement is just too fanciful. A seat in the House of Lords is guaranteed.

Offers to go to the United Nations are more likely than to the European Union but after the next election what is to stop Tony Blair giving him that ministerial job for which he must still secretly yearn?



**THE WEEK IN
WESTMINSTER**

MICHAEL BROWN

Don't write him out of the political script yet.

MR ASHDOWN'S announcement took the focus away from the heavily trailed statement on Lord reform.

The craftiest manoeuvre was the delicious stitch-up of William Hague with the appointment of Lord Wakeham as chairman of the Royal Commission.

I have heard that Mr Blair was planning to call in Lord Butler, the former cabinet minister surprised few at Westminster.

After all, when Baroness Thatcher contemplated standing for the second ballot in the Tory leadership election in 1990, he agreed to be her campaign manager only if she interviewed each cabinet minister to



Paddy Ashdown, whose resignation will affect his party's cosy ties with Tony Blair John Voos

Conservative leader tries to oppose the reform.

That fine old fox Lord Wakeham, of course, seized his opportunity to move back on to the high table of power. The ease with which he has transferred his loyalty to a Labour prime minister surprised even those who believed he set a trap for Lady Thatcher, knowing that most of the Cabinet would tell her to go. Some even think he encouraged them in the process.

Tories tend to regard him with some disdain, so they were not surprised when his name popped up in the chair of the Royal Commission. Apparently Lord Wakeham did not even consult Mr Hague about the appointment.

He joins the growing list of former Tory grandees who have de-

obtained their personal support. Many believe he set a trap for Lady Thatcher, knowing that most of the Cabinet would tell her to go. Some even think he encouraged them in the process.

LORD LAMONT of Lerwick, the former Tory chancellor, made his maiden speech in the Lords on, inevitably, the subject of the single European currency. Only just within the bounds of non-controversial convention, he opined on the lack

of democracy in Europe. "Europe, I fear, will never be democratic, because it is not a nation; where there is no democracy there is no accountability."

It was all a far cry from his other maiden speech, made in the Commons 27 years ago, during the passage of the European Communities Bill, when he described himself as "strongly pro-European".

He went on to say: "The legitimacy of political institutions is based upon consent but it is also based on effectiveness... It is no service to the British people to block the development of new institutions geared to the problems of our time." Ted Heath commended the speech as "excellent" in his autobiography and will, no doubt, be sending it to Lord Lamont to refresh his rusty memory.

CHUMPS OF the week was David Prior, son of Lord Prior and Tory MP for North Norfolk, who waded in at Prime Minister's questions to attack Labour MEPs over the recent vote in the European Parliament on fraud and maladministration in the Commission. Mr Blair could hardly believe his luck that a Tory MP would mention anything to do with MEPs "on this day above all days... since he has just lost two of his own MEPs and half the Tory group in Europe voted with us".

MOST TORIES hoped Mr Hague's "The British Way" party conference speech was just a holding operation and a slogan, pinched from Gordon Brown, to grab a standing ovation in the absence of any new Tory policies but the wretched phrase repeated its vacuous head again this week.

Amazingly, Mr Hague chose to make this speech about "brassy Britain" on the day Jonathan Aitken's court case took place. Inevitably, newspapers buried this supposedly keynote speech under mountains of prose about Tory sleaze. Another failure by the Conservative spin-doctors? Mind you, perhaps this was just as well, since it seemed to amount to little more than the Tory leader throwing his support behind cold beer and *EastEnders*. Let us hope we have heard the last of this empty slogan before it is ridiculed as much as the ill-fated "Back to Basics", which heralded the previous Tory policy of warm beer and bicycling maiden aunts.

ROBIN COOK was heartened by the reception he received from Labour MPs when he visited the members' tea-rooms this week. Eric Clarke (Lab, Midlothian), one of the kindest and most popular of MPs, told him not to worry about the publicity generated by Margaret Cook's book and that the Foreign Secretary's troubles would soon be behind him. Some colleagues thought he was overdoing it, however; when he was apparently overheard saying: "Keep your pecker up, Robin."

PETER MANDELSON appears to have taken up my suggestion last week that he should go to South Africa and work for the ANC in the coming elections. Spin Street, in Cape Town, I am told by independent reader Kenneth Parker, would be even more appropriate for Mr Mandelson to billet himself, as it crosses Parliament Street and is a stone's throw from the Parliament building.

Rebel Labour MP to stand as independent

BY STEPHEN GOODWIN
Scotland Correspondent

LABOUR'S TORMENT on the road to the Scottish Parliament elections continued yesterday with confirmation by the rebel MP Dennis Canavan that he intends to stand as an independent candidate. He will now be automatically expelled from the party he joined in 1965.

Gordon Brown and John Prescott were both in Edinburgh yesterday to attack the

MP believes he is the victim of a "Stalinist cabal" at Labour headquarters, but according to Donald Dewar, Secretary of State for Scotland, he was "not good enough".

Mr Canavan said: "Three people in the Labour Party headquarters are in effect dictating to over 300 Labour Party members in my constituency and telling them they can't pick me as their candidate."

Lilley plans Tory revamp

BY COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

MPs, academics, and other party members will work on ideas for welfare, education, health, law and order and the economy. They are expected to look at radical policies with a

right-wing edge, including supplementing NHS spending from taxes by more people paying for their healthcare through insurance or private prescriptions. The research will show what kind of party William Hague intends to lead against Tony Blair's "third way".

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The Link

THE LEADING powers were putting the final touches to new proposals yesterday which offer perhaps the only chance of peaceful political settlement to the crisis in Kosovo.

The plan, being refined by senior officials of the Contact Group meeting in London, calls for much greater autonomy for the Serbian-run province, including its own government.

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Kosovo sees last chance for peaceful settlement

THE LEADING powers were putting the final touches to new proposals yesterday which offer perhaps the only chance of starting negotiations for a peaceful political settlement to the crisis in Kosovo.

The plan, being refined by senior officials of the Contact Group meeting in London, calls for much greater autonomy for the Serbian-run province, including its own government.

BY RUPERT CORNWELL

and its own police, as well as a review of Kosovo's status after three years. This last provision is an attempt to bridge the irreconcilable difference between the ethnic Albanians' demand for independence, and the refusal of President Slobodan Milosevic in Belgrade to grant it.

After yesterday's talks,

chaired by the political director at the Foreign Office, Ennry Jones Parry, the aim is to hold preliminary talks with both sides. If the proposals are not rejected, Ministers from the six countries - Britain, France, Italy, Germany, Russia and the United States - could meet within days to issue formal invitations to a Kosovo conference.

The alternative is renewed full-scale fighting in spring, in only eight to 10 weeks.

Failure of this could leave a reluctant Nato with no option than to use force to halt the latest bout of repression against the ethnic Albanians, 90 per cent of Kosovo's population.

Though he has grudgingly frozen the expulsion order against the head monitor at the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, William Walker, and allowed

Finnish pathologists to perform autopsies on the 45 ethnic Albanian victims of last Friday's alleged massacre, Mr Milosevic did not yield to Nato's demand to reduce the army and police presence in Kosovo to the level of a year ago. Meanwhile, Louise Arbour, the chief UN war crimes prosecutor, is still refused entry to the province.

Albanians are divided between the elected political lead-

ership of Ibrahim Rugova, which advocates a peaceful path to independence, and the Kosovo Liberation Army, which for 12 months has carried the military fight to the Yugoslavs.

KLA strategy does seem to be to good President Milosevic into brutal repression that will leave the West with no option but to use force against him.

Just as the officials sat down at the Foreign Office, Serbia

said five elderly Serbian civilians had been kidnapped by KLA fighters during the night.

The Foreign Secretary,

Robin Cook, said military action had to be "in support of a clear political goal". To an extent, Contact Group hands are tied by Russia's rejection of air strikes against Belgrade, which it warns might detonate a wider Balkans war. Although air strikes are unlikely, the West is

keeping the threat alive. The US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, said: "Force is the only language he [Mr Milosevic] appears to understand."

Nato's supreme commander, General Wesley Clark, insisted the lifting of the expulsion order against Mr Walker was not enough. He said it was a "half compromise" that only solved a problem Mr Milosevic had created himself.

Serbs rewrite history of Racak massacre

BY BILL NEELY
in Pristina

Racak on a frosty Saturday morning. The first six bodies are of men in their sixties: not the typical recruits of the rebel Kosovo Liberation Army. They have all been shot more than once, most in the head, although one has no head. They have been killed near their homes; three brothers together on a path leading away from the Serb attack. A Swedish monitor notes that the dead are all in civilian clothes and unarmed and that there are no signs of a battle.

A few hundred yards away are three more bodies on the hillside. Each has been shot. Then in a gully, strung out like a hideous necklace, are six old men, fatally and terribly injured, the line of their bodies forming the heap of corpses. Many in this pile are teenagers and young men. Many have been shot in the head, several directly between the eyes.

Moving around them, taking photographs and notes, and speaking into small cassette recorders, are half a dozen international monitors. After working for two hours one monitor, a London police officer, tells me he believes many of the victims have been shot at close range.

After viewing the scene, the chief monitor, William Walker, says: "As a layman, it looks to me like executions." Mr Walker is no mere layman. He was an American diplomat and ambassador in Central America during the murderous Eighties and is no stranger to state-sponsored killing. His feisty British right-hand man, John Drewniak, says of the dead: "These were old men, most of them, in their work clothes."

I look carefully to try to match the bullet-holes in the clothing of the men with the wounds on their bodies. I witnessed an incident in October when the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) removed clothing from two of their wounded men to protect them from attack in hospital. So my eyes are open, but in this case it does not appear to me that any clothing has been removed. Only one man wears black boots like those I have seen worn by KLA

rebels. But in Kosovo there is not a wide range of black boots. One experienced monitor later said he was convinced the bullet holes and the wounds matched.

The villagers I talk to are quite adamant about what happened. The men in this group were separated by Serb police from the women and children, and were told they would be taken to a nearby police station. Instead they were ordered up the hill to their deaths.

Two days later the Serbs shelled Racak and took away the bodies. They had the evidence.

After just one day of post-mortem examinations, after completing the autopsies on just five bodies, the chief pathologist said: "Not a single body bears any sign of execution."

If execution requires the victim's hands to be tightly bound and their eyes covered with black cloth, "There was no massacre," he announced. It is safe to assume that his eventual report will provide the scientific back-up for this grotesque verdict.

On Thursday, two French journalists raised questions about the massacre. The KLA, they alleged, may have fabricated some of the evidence and moved some of the bodies. A television cameraman's footage of the attack, they pointed out, did not tally with the villagers' account.

I have seen the footage shot by the Serbian cameraman. It shows the Serbian police attacking, then moving from house to house. The fact that it does not show the Serbs killing

villagers does not mean that such killings did not take place.

The monitors concede that some of the bodies may have been moved. They suspect that a bullet wound to the head of one victim was inflicted after death. This does not prove, however, that evidence was fabricated. For example, it does not rule out the possibility that the head wound was a *coup de grâce* inflicted by a Serb police officer in the mistaken belief that the victim was still alive.

The French articles have been seized upon by the Serb authorities desperate to muddy the waters of Racak.

There is no doubt that the KLA was in Racak when the Serbs attacked. A KLA commander told me eight of his men had been killed but he insisted that none of them was among the dead in the hillside gully. Of course, he may be lying. But even if he is, surely that does not justify the killing of the other 32 villagers.

I believe the villagers did not lie when they described the Serb attack. I believe 15-year-old Hasbe Azemi was telling the truth when he described how his father was led away by the police. His father is now dead.

The monitors are adamant:

this was a massacre. I found the evidence compelling. I then witnessed days of brutal shelling by the Serbs to seize the evidence. So far the Serb investigators have not interviewed a single villager about what happened. The chief prosecutor of the War Crimes Tribunal has been refused access

to the country. Access to the site has been denied.

The world has to be clear about what the Serbian police did in Racak last Saturday and what they are trying to do now.

Because, as Kundera said: "The bloody massacre in Bangladesh quickly covered over the memory of the bloody invasion of Czechoslovakia, the assassination of Allende drowned out the groans of Bangladesh, the war in the Sinai desert made people forget Allende, the Cambodian massacre made people forget Sinai, and so on and so forth until ultimately everyone lets everything be forgotten."

We must not forget Racak. I never will.

Bill Neely is ITN's Europe Correspondent



Siget Radu/Reuters

To assist in the struggle of memory against forgetting, walk with me through the village and up the hill above

No massacre.

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To assist in the struggle of memory

After apartheid: South Africa's last white president stakes claim to place in history as architect of new order

De Klerk, an odd breed of conservative

F W DE KLERK. South Africa's last white president, supporter then dismantler of apartheid, smokes hard on his cigarette, then agrees. It has been a radical decade – politically and privately – for a man born into the heart of the conservative, white Afrikaner establishment.

Mr de Klerk began it by negotiating himself and the Afrikaner Volk out of power, ending decades of injustice and brutal violence by finally giving black people the vote. And he has finished it with another shock: for his people by ending a marriage that lasted 39 years, almost as long as apartheid, to marry another woman 16 years his junior. He is a rather odd breed of conservative. Mr de Klerk.

"I was always at the centre of my party," he says emphatically.

BY MARY BRAID
saintly President Nelson Mandela? Or is it, as the cynics say, an attempt by an embittered man to rewrite and sanitise a chequered political past, cleaning up the dirt that would besmirch the achievements he wants to be remembered for?

"I am not putting up a fight for recognition of any contribution," he insists. "The ANC is not prepared to give us that full recognition but I find the international community is."

But one wonders. It must hurt that no one questions President Nelson Mandela's contribution to the miraculous negotiated transfer of power in a country that seemed set for a bloodbath. But many question Mr de Klerk's, and still believe he should never have received the joint Nobel peace prize

with Mr Mandela. He insists his role is recognised in the US and England and was only contentious in the Nobel prize's home country, Norway. He

writes about that in the book

with Mr Mandela. After confirming an open secret – that despite their public shows of unity, the relations between the two men were badly

strained – he describes the evening after the Nobel award ceremony when he stood with Mr Mandela on the balcony of an hotel to watch a quaint torchlight procession in their joint honour.

Then Mr De Klerk became aware that the crowd below had started to shout ANC slogans and the old anti-Afrikaner war cry: "Kill the farmer, Kill the Boer". For an encore the Norwegians joined in a rousing chorus of the ANC anthem "Nkosi Sikeleli Afrika".

There is something naïvely Afrikaner about his observation that he "was made to feel quite unwelcome". But then he champions a people who have never really understood why the world could not see their predicament, as a small beleaguered white tribe on the dark continent.

Mr de Klerk says he wrote the book to state the Afrikaner case and challenge the stereotype of his people as racist extremists. "I tried to project myself and the de Klerk family as a prototype for the normal moderate average Afrikaner family," he says, "and through my experiences to put into perspective why we did what we did."

He insists he is not setting scores with anyone in particular. But most press attention has focused on his revelations about the acrimonious relationship with President Mandela, and his criticism of a man beyond reproach in many people's judgement.

Mr de Klerk says the gathering of criticism of Mr Mandela from the book has created an "unbalanced picture", and that he also gives credit where it is due. "Yes, I think he is a great man," he says. "But like all great men he has his faults and has made mistakes."

He reveals that during the long precarious negotiations Mr Mandela would routinely insult him, in public and private, and phone him in the middle of the night to berate him for the violence rocking the country.

Mr de Klerk was, and is, offended that the ANC refused to take his word that he was not sanctioning the violence, carried out by a shadowy Third Force, led by diehard white security police. But many will snort at his assertion that he did not know about government-sanctioned assassination squads – both before and after

he became president, and his explanation that while he served on the infamous State Security Council he was never part of its secretive inner circle.

Mr de Klerk has never claimed any damascene conversion in the jettisoning of apartheid. He claims the National Party decided that "separate development" – the white euphemism for apartheid – had to go in the mid-1980s. The townships were ablaze, international isolation was increasing, and South Africa was on the brink of economic disaster.

He insists, however, that the National Party's conclusion also had a moral dimension. "It [apartheid] had failed to bring justice to all South Africans," he says. But even here he cannot win. His detractors say he was just a pragmatic politician, astute and flexible enough to see the writing on the wall.

There is one innocuous statement in the book that seems to shed some light on this revolutionary conservatism. It comes in an early chapter, when he meets Marlene, his first wife, when both are students at Potchefstroom University. She already had a boyfriend – Mr de Klerk's friend – and he a girlfriend. "But I decided to change all that," he writes simply. And he did.

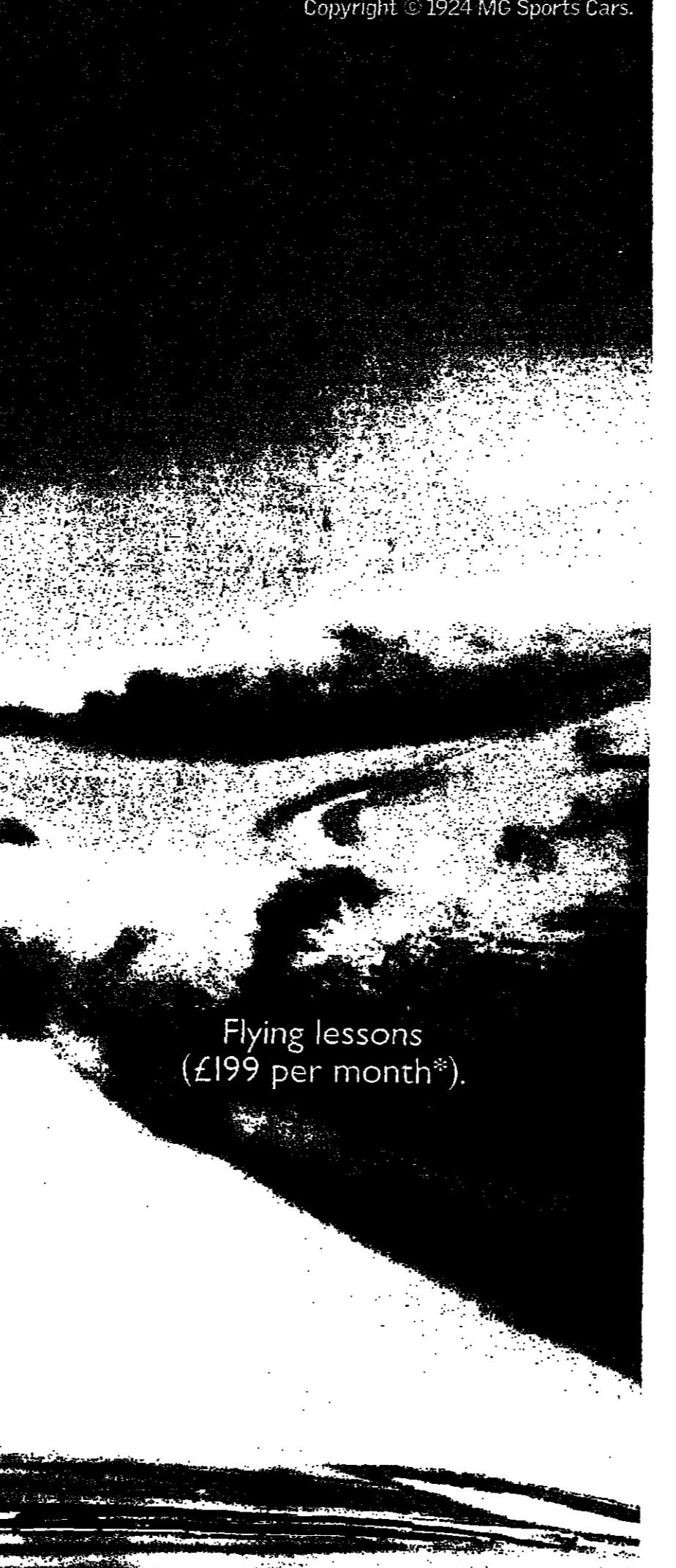
It was the same three decades later, when he and Marlene met Elita Georgiadis and her husband. He and Elita fell in love. It took longer this time to "change all that" because there was so much "pain and hurt involved". But after much soul-searching he did.

He claims that once made, he has always stuck to his decisions – personal and political – and that he cannot live a lie.

Despite the doom and gloom about crime and the economy, Mr de Klerk claims to be optimistic about the future. He admires the "intellectual and managerial abilities" of the deputy president Thabo Mbeki, Mr Mandela's anointed heir.

But he worries that the ANC will blame all its failures on the old oppressors, and he makes a plea, without a trace of irony, for Mr Mbeki to resist any drift back to racial polarisation. As if it ever went away.

W de Klerk says he wrote his new autobiography to counter the stereotype of the Afrikaner people as racist extremists David Sandison



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Senate looks for 'honourable exit'

BY MARY DEJEVSKY
in Washington

THE SENATE trial of President Clinton went into its seventh day, with the 100 senators finally promoted from passive listeners into active questioners.

Still subject to the rule of silence, at least in the chamber, they had to submit questions in writing through the presiding judge, the Chief Justice of the US Supreme Court, William Rehnquist, but the direction of the questions as he read them out gave the first intimation of the direction of Senate thinking.

The start of yesterday's question-and-answer session, due to last through today, coincided with a shift of mood in favour of an early resolution.

Pleas by the former Democratic senator Dale Bumpers and his call to give Americans "a good night's sleep and end this nightmare" had swayed the Senate as no other speech since the trial began. But Mr Clinton's State of the Union address on Tuesday had also had its effect, raising his approval ratings above 70 per cent.

Removing as popular a president was always going to present a dilemma for the Senate, and particularly for its Republican majority, and the search was on yesterday for "an hon-



The sun fading over the Capitol, where on the seventh day of President Bill Clinton's trial yesterday senators put written questions to the defence Kevin Lamarque

ourable exit strategy". Several hints were dropped by Mr Bumpers that renewed consideration should be given to the proposal by the former Republican senator and failed presidential candidate, Bob

Dole, at the last crucial juncture of the impeachment process, before the vote in the House of Representatives last month. Mr Dole had added his voice to that of several eminences from both parties, including the for-

mer presidents Ford and Carter, calling for a motion of censure against Mr Clinton for his conduct with Monica Lewinsky and acknowledgement by the President that he lied under oath.

The intention then had been to save Mr Clinton from a Senate trial and the Republicans from the opprobrium they might incur by forcing one. The purpose now is similar: not only to save the President, but

to save Republicans from more damage.

One possibility is that a censure motion could be tabled on Monday, when votes are to be taken on whether to dismiss the case or to continue - probably

Senate is effectively hung. It lacks the majority to dismiss the case (51) but also the majority (67) needed to convict.

While Mr Clinton's lawyers had concentrated on challenging the evidence for the two charges against him - perjury and obstruction of justice - Mr Bumpers, a one-time governor of Mr Clinton's home state of Arkansas, had concentrated on the human element and the big historical picture.

What Mr Clinton had done was "a terrible moral lapse" that had threatened to destroy his family, but was not grounds for impeachment. Impeachment was designed to "protect the people, not punish the President. If you vote to convict, in my opinion, you're going to be creating more havoc than he could possibly create."

With two major Republican meetings going on in Washington over the weekend, however - the twice-yearly gathering of the Republican National Council, and the annual convention of the right-wing Conservative Political Action Conference - there was pressure on Republican senators also to hold a firm moral line. While there was much discussion in Senate corridors, any compromise, it seemed, would have to wait until next week.

Republican right attacks Bush and son

BY ANDREW MARSHALL
in Washington

THE REPUBLICANS have begun their campaign to wrest control of the White House from the Democrats with savage attacks on their real enemies: other Republicans.

George W Bush, Governor of Texas and son of the former president George Bush, is the front-runner, but plenty of other candidates for the Republican nomination in the 2000 Presidential election are emerging almost daily, and they have Mr Bush in their sights.

Two of the candidates, former Tennessee governor Lamar Alexander and billionaire businessman Steve Forbes, laid into Mr Bush and his father this week as representatives of a failed "compassionate conservatism" conservatism who would betray the party again.

"Is Mr Bush trying to tell us that conservatism as a political philosophy, by his definition, is without compassion?" Mr Alexander asked. The venue was the Conservative Political Action Committee, a key forum for the party's right.

"We were betrayed" by Mr Bush Senior, said Mr Forbes

before attacking the ex-president's son. "If we allow ourselves to be seduced by these mushy moderates, make no mistake: they will take us down to defeat once again."

Dan Quayle, president Bush's vice-president, has also come close to declaring his candidacy. "I want to be president," he said on CNN on Thursday night. "I think I'm the best qualified."

Mr Quayle, too, had a pop at Mr Bush. "I have ordered my staff to never - ever - utter the words 'compassionate conservative,'" he said. "This silly and insulting term was created by liberal Republicans and is nothing more than code for surrendering our principles."

Other possible or declared Republican candidates include Senator John McCain of Arizona, Senator Bob Smith of New Hampshire, Congressman John Kasich of Ohio, Gary Bauer, a former Reagan official and Elizabeth Dole, wife of former candidate Robert Dole.

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B&Q

Are the church firebombers intent on oppressing India's illiterates?

BY PETER POPHAM
in Delhi

LAST MAY India risked becoming an international pariah by carrying out nuclear tests in the Rajasthan desert, abruptly reawakening dormant fears of a nuclear apocalypse and plunging the impoverished sub-continent into a nuclear arms race.

At the time the government of Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee was clear and confident in its defiance of world opinion, and was rewarded at home by a wave of popular support. But now India is again courting the role of global leper after a series of violent attacks on members of the country's Christian minority by extreme right-wing Hindu groups.

Christians make up 2.5 per cent of the population, according to the 1991 census, a small minority but a figure that amounts to over 23 million people. There were more than 120 violent anti-Christian incidents during 1998, and a sudden increase since Christmas Day, 30 churches have been attacked or destroyed.

This new outrage to world opinion is no part of official Indian government policy yet, as the expressions of international concern mount, Mr Vajpayee seems powerless to say anything either to halt the attacks or to appease his international critics.

The reason is the attacks are being carried out by political allies of Mr Vajpayee's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Recently Mr Vajpayee was given a tour of the Dangs, the poverty-stricken tribal region of South Gujarat, where the recent violence has been concentrated. But the value of the tour as an expression of concern was debased when it emerged that his local guide was one of the alleged ring-leaders of the attacks, cur-



Kanta Jhimani, a Christian from Jamnagar in Gujarat, outside one of the churches destroyed in a spate of post-Christmas attacks by Hindu nationalists AP

rently out of prison on bail. At the end of the tour he played into the hands of the extremists by calling for a "national debate" on the question of people converting from one religion to another. One of the perennial charges of the Hindu nationalists is that Christians engage in forcible conversions – at gunpoint according to one of their national leaders.

It was after the latest spate of violence in Gujarat that the

international community began speaking up about the issue. In the past fortnight, Dutch, Luxembourg and German ministers have condemned the attacks. The Foreign Secretary Robin Cook raised the matter this week with Mr Vajpayee's secretary when the latter visited London.

When India exploded nuclear devices, its purpose was plain: to turn itself into a world power and gain a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council. What the Hindu nationalists hope to achieve by beating up impoverished tribal Christians and vandalising their places of worship is less obvious.

The most pragmatic theory, which has yet to make it into the respectable newspapers but is already the mainstay of cocktail party talk in the capital, is that the real target of the attacks is Sonia Gandhi, the president of

the Congress Party. It is not absolutely certain that Mrs Gandhi is a practising Catholic; at the Mass held during the funeral service for Mother Teresa in 1997, she was seen to refrain from taking the sacrament. But her mother regularly attends Mass at the Vatican's chapel when in Delhi, and there is no doubt that Sonia, an Italian by birth, is descended from solidly Christian stock.

Mrs Gandhi's most obvious

weakness is that she is a foreigner. She has done everything in her power to play down this inconvenient fact, always wearing a sari, making speeches in broken Hindi and proclaiming undying devotion to her adopted country.

For the mass of unsophisticated Indians, the mere fact that she entered the Gandhi family by marriage is good enough. But if, as the theory goes, the attacks on Christians

modern extension of the feudal system, poor communities vote *en masse* for that party or candidate who most persuasively patronises or tyrannises them.

Burning down churches is the first step in this power play. The next is what the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP, the World Hindu Council) refers to as "awakening" or "homecoming" – the reconversion of Christians to Hinduism.

The third theory (and none of these theories excludes the others) is that the real purpose of the attacks on Christians is to keep the poor poor. This line was spelt out last month by the international executive president of the VHP, Ashok Singhal. According to Mr Singhal, the awarding of the Nobel Prize to the Indian economist Amartya Sen was part of a Christian conspiracy to propagate their religion and wipe out Hinduism from this country.

Mr Singhal's reasoning goes like this. Professor Sen asserts that literacy and education are essential for India's development. It is Christian missions that are setting up schools in deprived areas, and enabling the poor to escape from illiteracy. By giving increased currency to Professor Sen's idea, the Nobel committee is enabling the missions to magnify their influence.

Mr Singhal seems blind to the obvious implication of his remark: that the way of Hinduism is the way of continuing mass illiteracy and grinding poverty. "The poor have to be kept illiterate," a perceptive writer called Walter Fernandes wrote in *The Times of India* last week, "lest they become aware of their oppression and demand liberation from bondage."

The best way to do that is to burn down their churches and chase them back into the Hindu fold. And Mr Vajpayee, the respectable face of Hindu nationalism, has nothing at all to say against it.

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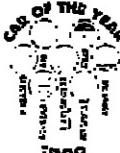
boot release and safeguard immobiliser • power front windows • 15" multi spoke alloy wheels, sports style seats and front fog lamps

£13,000^t or £172^{*} pm at 11.5% APR on Options

climate option pack: air conditioning • "quickclear" windscreen • heated washer jets • electrically operated and heated door mirrors • £500 (incl vat)

reflex option pack: electronic anti lock brakes • electronic brake force distribution • electronic dual mode traction control • side airbags • £500 (incl vat)

the ford focus is also available as a five door estate and four door saloon.



Car Of The Year 1999

^t driver and passenger airbags are standard on the ford focus. driver airbag is standard on every other ford car. always remember to use your safety belt. *official fuel consumption mpg: 1.6i urban/cold 30.7, extra urban 51.3, combined 40.9. **plus deposit and optional purchase payment, retail custom and metallic paint - £250, the s

Ex-president's brother gets 50 years

THE BROTHER of the former Mexican president Carlos Salinas was convicted of murder and sentenced to 50 years in prison in a dramatic finale to Mexico's most celebrated trial in recent history.

Judge Ricardo Ojeda found Raul Salinas, 32, guilty of plotting the 1994 murder of Jose Francisco Ruiz Massieu, the No 2 man in the long-ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) to which the Salinas brothers belonged.

"I must say there was no confession from the guilty party nor direct proof of his guilt. But

BY DAVID LUHNOW
in Toluca, Mexico

his responsibility in the crime was shown through circumstantial evidence," Ojeda said in a written statement. Salinas' lawyers said they would appeal and had two more chances by law to free their client, who has come to symbolise how the once untouchable power of Mexican politicians has been undone by democratic change.

"Proof? What proof? There was not a single shred of evidence that merited this sentence."

attorney, Juan Velazquez, told reporters after the verdict was handed down.

Salinas' family also decried the decision. "I am praying for a quick appeal," since Raul is innocent of the crime he is charged of," said his sister, Adriana Salinas.

The conviction was an important victory for President Ernesto Zedillo, who risked his reputation in approving the arrest and broke unwritten political rules that protected former presidents and their families from scrutiny. His party, the PRI, called the decision a tri-

umph for the legal system. "We hope that the judge and judicial branch act strictly in accordance with the truth and the law," said Carlos Rojas, No 2 in the PRI, and social development minister under Salinas.

But he acknowledged the party's worst nightmare – punishment at the polls in the 2000 presidential election, even though the PRI kicked Raul Salinas out of the party years ago. "I hope that this does not have any electoral connotations," he said.

Raul Salinas, also convicted of using false documents and of perjury, had insisted he was innocent ever since his February 1995 arrest, after his brother stepped down as president. "A tradition has been broken that was respected within the circles of power since the end of the 1910-1917 revolution until today, that neither the president nor his family could be touched," said Lorenzo Meyer, a historian.

A confessed gunman, Daniel Trevino, killed Ruiz Massieu with a single bullet to the neck as he sat in his car outside a Mexico City hotel. The murder was in the same year as the as-

sassination of the PRI presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio and prompted fears that the political system was being torn apart by violence.

The ensuing four-year inquiry gripped most Mexicans and often swung from serious to overtly comic, with a string of different prosecutors handling the case. One, the victim's brother, was later accused of covering up Salinas' involvement, and another prosecutor brought in a witch for help.

Prosecutors argued Salinas planned the murder because of personal and political differ-

Pepsi
peps up
papal
parade

By PHIL DAVISON
in Mexico City

THE POPE'S visit to Mexico, which started yesterday, will be more akin to a sports event with 25 official sponsors from Pepsi to a crisp company using his image on their products. But its purpose will be deadly serious, largely to stem the tide of evangelical churches creeping up on South America's traditional Roman Catholicism.

Amid widespread criticism of the commercialisation of his visit and rumours that his



The Pope: Trip sponsored by Pepsi and crisp firm

robes might even carry a Sabritas crisps logo, a Vatican spokesman called a news conference to say sponsorship was needed to cover the visit's \$2m (£1.25m) costs. But he said the Pope would not, as rumoured, wear or pose next to any commercial logo. "The Pope will not come out dressed as a papa," he said, playing on the fact that "papa" means both "pope" and "potato" in Spanish.

The ailing 78-year-old pontiff, on his fourth visit to Mexico in 20 years, will sign a document outlining church strategy in the Americas for the next millennium, including how to stanch the spread of Protestantism. About 90 per cent of Mexicans list themselves as Catholics but sociologists say that is often to avoid persecution or discrimination.



A nine-day-old panda lies in an incubator, waiting to be fed. Justin Jin/Reuters

Surrogate parent counts the hours to feed time

WEEK IN THE LIFE LIU XUEFENG, PANDA KEEPER

repetitive business of keeping baby pandas healthy and happy. After previous twin births, the zoo always removed one of the cubs for permanent hand-rearing, but it usually died. With Le Le, the keepers tried a different approach.

One cub is placed with the mother for sucking while the other is in a separate room with human carers. The twins are switched every 12 hours and Mr Liu is one of the two people who cares for which ever cub is away.

HE WAS on days this week – the 7.30am to 7.30pm shift. In a small room below the zoo's panda enclosure is the wooden crib and mattress for the cub not with its mother. Mr Liu's day is similar to that of any parent, dominated by feeding, watching and playing.

Each baby panda now

weighs about 7kg (15lb) a massive increase in weight since birth but it will be several more months before they have passed the most vulnerable stage and can feed themselves. Not wanting to tempt fate, the cubs will not be named until they reach six months.

The two baby pandas swap places each morning at about the same time as Mr Liu starts his shift. "I stroke the cub like a cat to wake him up," he said. One cub is fed and transferred to Le Le's enclosure, while the other one is brought out after a night with its mother to spend the day with Mr Liu.

"When being fed by hand, the cubs like to be hugged. When I hold the cub, he can fool around and sometimes they scratch me," said Mr Liu, whose upper lip bears the mark of the last encounter.

The same routines are repeated later in the day, with a mid-afternoon feed and a 9pm final snack to keep up the baby pandas' calorie requirements.

For the time being the two cubs just take liquids; not until about 14 months will they start to eat the pandas' staple diet of bamboo.

While the rest of the world goes dewy-eyed at the sight of a baby panda, Mr Liu is utterly unswayed by it all. "There is nothing interesting in the daily work," he said.

"It is ordinary work that outsiders think is interesting."

expectmore



the new ford focus



Al purchase payment, retail customers only. Typical example: monthly payments £171.25, mileage pa 12,000, deposit £4,550, balance £8,450, total credit charge £1,634 (including finance facility fee of £70 payable with first monthly payment, further charges may be excluded, metallic paint - £250). The seven organising publications of the "Car of the Year 1999" award are: *Autocar*, *Auto Motor und Sport*, *Automobile*, *Autopista*, *Stern*, *Autovisie*.

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BUSINESS

THE INDEPENDENT
Saturday 23 January 1999

THE INDEPENDENT
Saturday 23 January 1999

BRIEFING

Marston considers improving bid

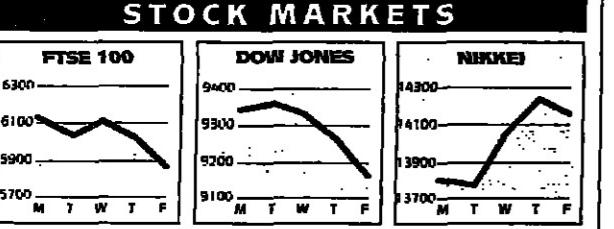
MARSTON, Thompson & Evershed, the brewer embroiled in a hostile bid battle with Wolverhampton & Dudley, is considering improving the terms of its offer in an attempt to make its counter bid more attractive to shareholders. Marstons feels it is ahead on strategy but behind on cash. It will spend the next few days considering the terms, value and structure of its £319m bid. The Pedigree bitter brewer is likely to make an announcement next week ahead of the close of Wolves' £289m offer on 4 February.

Grid completes Energis sale

NATIONAL GRID yesterday completed the £1.2bn sale of a 25 per cent stake in the telecoms operator Energis - whose chief executive, Michael Grabiner, is pictured left - through a placing of shares and exchangeable bonds. The company placed 60 million shares at 1650p, raising £990m. The sale of bonds, which are convertible into Energis shares, raised a further \$400m. The shares fell 12.5p to 1600p.

Euro-style prices index rises 1.5%

THE UK HARMONISED INDEX OF CONSUMER PRICES (HICP) - an alternative measure of inflation used by European policy-makers - rose by 1.5 per cent in December. The figure was marginally higher than November's 1.4 per cent rise, reflecting increases in the prices of food and household goods, according to the Office for National Statistics. The UK HICP figure remains well below the 2 per cent ceiling set by the European Central Bank for countries within the euro-zone. Gordon Brown this week reaffirmed the Government would continue to use the Retail Prices Index - the more traditional measure of inflation - when setting the Bank of England's inflation target. However, the Treasury would monitor developments in the HICP he said.



THE SPECTRE of crisis in Latin America and China revisited the world's stockmarkets yesterday, as uneasy investors took share prices sharply lower around the globe.

By DIANE COYLE
AND ANDREW MARSHALL
in Washington

A radical proposal by the Argentinian government for an effective monetary union with the US unsettled markets across the region. Brazil's Bovespa index had lost 3 per cent in early trading, and the real continued to slide after Thursday's dramatic fall. It touched a record low of 1.74 to the dollar before stabilising.

Crosses the Atlantic, the FTSE-100 index ended 161 points lower at 5,461.2.

Falls in European share

prices were led by companies such as Volkswagen, Fiat and Telefonica with a big presence in Brazil.

Argentina said that a working group led by the IMF, Argentinean officials and US Deputy Treasury Secretary Larry Summers was working on the idea, which would cede

Reports that the US was discussing a currency union with Argentina met with confusing reactions in Washington, where officials did their best to dampen speculation while not writing the idea off entirely.

"There is no formal working group or treaty process under way," a US Treasury spokeswoman said, but refused to say if there had been informal talks.

Argentina said that a working group led by the IMF, Argentinean officials and US Deputy Treasury Secretary Larry Summers was working on the idea, which would cede

all monetary control to the Federal Reserve. Argentina has even talked about extending the proposal to create a continental currency system akin to Europe's Economic and Monetary Union.

US officials want to find a way to stabilise currencies, but are aware that creating a currency union raises some important problems - economic, financial and political - and would take years to finally create.

And they say that they are more concerned about the underlying financial problems, and the reforms needed to cor-

rect them, than about quick fixes. In effect, as in Europe, they argue that economic convergence must precede any union of currencies.

Brazil's real has lost nearly a third of its value in 10 days. The country has seen more than \$6bn fly out of the country since the start of this year.

Ken Wainwright, an economist at Paribas in London, said: "Market sentiment has definitely turned on Brazil. The bottom line is that interest rates up to 18 per cent are further under-

mining economic vitality. With the Brazilian real now in freefall, we believe that investors will turn to China again.

The Hong Kong market had earlier been swept by rumours that international trust and investment corporations might fail, following the recent collapse of one of these investment vehicles in Guangdong.

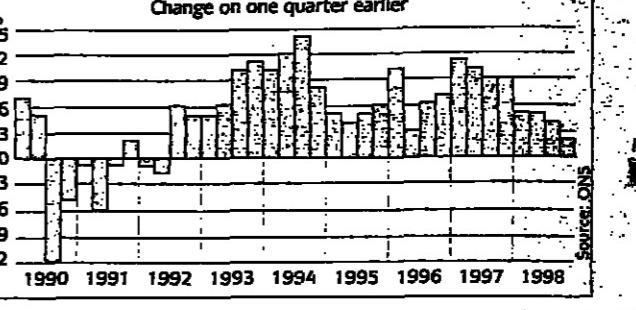
China are also starting to filter through. Capital protection seems to be the name of the game at the moment, and that is boosting safe haven flows."

The renewed flight to safety boosted the dollar yesterday. It climbed through the Yen 11 level on fears that China might yet be forced to devalue its currency.

The Hong Kong market had earlier been swept by rumours that international trust and investment corporations might fail, following the recent collapse of one of these investment vehicles in Guangdong.

He added: "Worries about

GROWTH IN GDP



Fears of a UK recession ease

BY LEA PATERSON

THE UK economy is proving more resilient than expected, according to figures yesterday, boosting hopes that outright recession could still be averted.

Growth remained positive in the fourth quarter, the Office for National Statistics said, despite falls in output in the manufacturing sector. However, analysts said the Gross Domestic Product figures were still the weakest since the last recession, and did not necessarily mean further interest rate cuts were off the cards.

Ken Wainwright at Paribas said: "We continue to expect the Monetary Policy Committee to lower rates in the first week of February, given the underlying deterioration in UK growth and the increasingly favourable outlook for inflation".

Dharshini David at HSBC Securities said: "We still think the MPC can squeeze in a further 0.25-point rate cut, although this might be followed by a few months of wait and see". The ONS said GDP grew by 0.2 per cent in the fourth

quarter of 1998, taking the overall growth rate for the year to 2.5 per cent.

Despite gloomy surveys over the past few weeks, the service sector grew by 0.6 per cent in the fourth quarter, only marginally down on the 0.8 per cent growth rate in the third quarter of the year. Analysts attributed the latent strength of the services sector to IT companies as well as providers of other business services such as management consultants, law firms and accountants.

Economists said surveys of

the services sector, which primarily measure changes in confidence, could have been affected by adverse developments in the international economy in autumn. Mr Wainwright said: "You do tend to get periods where people start to talk themselves into recession, and the surveys could be picking this up".

Others said there was frequently a "lag time" before falls in confidence feed through into lower output and predicted official figures would show the services sector slowing

sharp in the first quarter of this year. The picture was less bright in other parts of the economy, with manufacturing slipping into recession for the first time since 1991. The ONS did not provide precise figures for the drop in manufacturing output, but said growth had "fallen sharply". Ms David at HSBC said UK manufacturing could have contracted by as much as 0.75 per cent in the fourth quarter of 1998.

Amey in £81m bid for Servisair

By PETER THAL LARSEN

AMEY, the former construction company, which is reinventing itself as a services group, yesterday launched a £81.5m hostile takeover bid for Servisair, the under-fire airport services provider.

Servisair's board immediately rejected the offer as "wholly inadequate", arguing that it failed to reflect the company's true value. Servisair shares, valued at 200p each by Amey's bid, rose 41p to 217.5p as investors anticipated a bidding war for the company.

Servisair has been at the centre of takeover speculation since last month, when it revealed that it had received a number of approaches.

Amey has talked with Servisair directors for the past month in the hope of receiving a recommendation, but lost patience. "It was starting to look more and more like an auction," said Neil Ashley, the chairman.

Analysts said any bidder

would have to offer at least 220p a share to succeed. However, fund managers Schroders and Standard Life, which have a 25 per cent stake in Servisair, are also shareholders in Amey. Graham Roberts, Servisair chief executive, said discussions were continuing with other bidders but refused to name them.

Amey's chief executive, Brian Staples, said Servisair was good at managing its airport operations but had not been as successful at operating as a public company. Under Amey's

ownership the company could be reinvigorated. "It's a cracking opportunity," he said.

Amey believes it could make £2.5m of cost savings if it took control of Servisair, although it denied it was planning large-scale job cuts. Servisair's head

office, near Manchester, would also be kept open.

Mr Staples said that, as part of Amey, Servisair could cross-sell services to the train companies which are clients of Amey's track maintenance division.

GRE battle hots up as RSA joins fray

THE BATTLE for Guardian Royal Exchange, the insurance group, intensified yesterday after rival insurer Royal & Sun Alliance confirmed it is in talks about a potential £3.5bn cash and shares offer for the group.

In a statement issued partly to quell speculation that the group was preparing a £2bn rights issue to fund the deal, RSA, which is being advised by bankers NM Rothschild, said the discussions were to "explore the possibility of achieving

an agreed offer" but insisted "there is no certainty that such an agreement will be reached."

The move took the stock market by surprise, triggering a sharp fall in Royal Sun Alliance shares. Analysts said launching a bid for GRE runs contrary to everything Royal's embattled chief executive, Bob Mendelsohn, has been saying about his plans for the group.

The fact that after months of rumour at least one party has officially declared its hand came as extremely welcome to

Mathew Wright, at Daiwa Europe said: "We knew RSA was looking for a deal in 1999 but GRE? This was not the one we expected." Bankers said the entry of Royal smacks of panic on the part of Mr Mendelsohn, believed to be concerned that, with the group's market value having fallen to £7bn, it is vulnerable to a hostile bid.

The fact that after months of rumour at least one party has officially declared its hand came as extremely welcome to

too low, will not come back with a higher bid.

Bankers said that with Royal believed to have offered around 385p a share, Axa will have to offer at least £4 to stay in the game.

"The French have made it clear that they do not want to overpay. But they have made it clear that they want to get into the UK, and they realise that it is not every day that a business like GRE gets put on the block," said one.

All eyes are now focused on whether Sun Life, whose 350p-a-share offer was rejected as

www.bloomberg.com/uk

SOURCE: BLOOMBERG

TOURIST RATES

CLOSE

OPEN

YESTERDAY

NEXT DAY

100 = SPOT

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100 = 1997

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A price worth paying for stability?

ALL OF A sudden, the idea of monetary union is the height of fashion – except, that is, in Britain, where we still worry ourselves sick about loss of economic sovereignty. The euro is off to a flying start. Joseph Yam, head of the Hong Kong monetary authority, suggested a single currency for South-east Asia, and now Argentina's central bank is reported as wanting to swap the peso for the dollar. Well, who wouldn't?

But actually the idea is not quite as harebrained as it seems. President Carlos Menem has long said that he would accept full-bodied dollarisation before devaluation, and in any case, the currency board system operated by Argentina is already that in all but name. Unfortunately, the currency board is far from foolproof. As Hong Kong discovered last year, once investors start to believe it is unsustainable, it forces interest rates up to punishing levels, thus further undermining economic vitality.

With the Brazilian real now in free-fall, President Menem is beginning to feel the same sort of heat. But is it realistic to abandon the peso altogether? Just consider what is pro-



JEREMY
WARNER

Now Argentina's central bank is reported as wanting to swap the peso for the dollar

posed here. Argentina in effect becomes part of the US economy, but it has even fewer membership or citizens' rights than we do here in the UK. It would have no say or influence over US monetary policy, nor would its people be able to go and work in the US if economic conditions were poor in Argentina.

In the US, free movement of labour is often not enough to bring

about the necessary economic adjustments between states. So yes, even in the land of the free, interstate transfers, in effect subsidies, do take place through the federal budget in order to relieve economically depressed regions. That wouldn't and couldn't happen with Argentina. Nor would there be any lender of last resort to add stability to the banking system.

For any country, even a developing one, to think this a price worth paying for monetary stability rather puts our own concerns about the euro into perspective. Membership of the euro, whatever its drawbacks, at least gives you a seat on the European Central Bank.

It also gives free access to the European single market, backed by harmonised standards and rules of fair play, as well as the right to work anywhere within the union. Finally, it gives influence through the council of ministers and the European parliament over European law. None of these things would be open to Argentina as part of the dollar economy.

All of which makes the second part of the Argentine central bank's proposal – a "monetary association

treaty" with the US – a particularly intriguing one. What President Menem is saying is, give us a few concessions – a proper free trade agreement, a little bit of a say in monetary policy, perhaps even US working permits for our citizens. Predictably, this was getting an exceptionally cool response in Washington yesterday, but there is no doubt that it has rather put the US authorities on the spot.

Bill Clinton, Tony Blair and others with a supposed role on the world stage, drone on and on about the need for a global regulator; an early warning system to head off nascent financial and economic crises. They want credit guarantees, economic reform across the world, stabilisation pacts and greater transparency. They want rules to govern the hedge funds and speculators that their own rich economies have given birth to. And they want the message of a third way between the disciplines of capitalism and the needs of community to spread around the globe.

But when push comes to shove, are they prepared to stray beyond the rhetoric? Is the US really prepared to do the necessary in

spreading the dollar and the galvanising power of its free-market economy throughout the Americas. Self-interest dictates that it is not, however sympathetic it might feel towards President Menem's beggar bowl.

On the other hand, all conventional medicine has failed with Brazil, which now poses a very real threat to the US economy itself. Unconventional dollar regimes exist elsewhere in the world, most notably in Panama, and increasingly in Russia, whose currency even its own citizens do not want to take. But you only have to look at the misery of these countries to realise how ineffective monetary union without full economic union can be.

President Menem deserves a hearing. Whether anyone on Capitol Hill has the vision to listen to him is another thing.

YOU CAN barely turn the page of a newspaper these days without reading about the millennium bug in some shape or form. Everyone is exercised by it, and none more so than the banks. At National Westminster Bank alone, £150m has been spent trying to eradicate it. With that kind of outlay, it is to be hoped they

have succeeded. Certainly that's the message they want to get across, for even the remotest suggestion that they might not have done could in itself be enough to cause chaos in the banking system across the turn of the century.

Plans

are already well advanced

at the Bank of England to deal with a mass run on cash as we approach the new year. The printing presses will be running overtime to deliver it, the reasoning being that whatever the banks say or do to assuage people's fears, most people will in the end be guided by the better-safe-than-sorry philosophy. Many will stockpile cash just in case the cashpoint, switch and credit card systems fail at midnight.

I read somewhere that the Chinese authorities have instructed all their pilots to be in the air at the assigned time in an attempt to demonstrate to the world how well prepared they are for the wretched bug. Our bankers might perhaps think it unfortunate that they do not possess similar powers of oppression. Instead they have to prepare for the very real possibility of a mass switch back to the power of cash, at least for a month or two.

Blue chips dive as Brazilian worries spread

FOOTSIE FELL back below 6,000 points as the stock market fretted about Brazil, New York and the receding possibility of an interest rate cut next month.

The blue chip index plunged 161.1 points to 5,861.2 in heavy trading, with turnover again around 1.3 billion shares.

Brazil's fragile economy remained a cause for concern, hitting most world markets, including New York.

But the Dow Jones Average, down 175 points at one time during London trading, also had to contend with the impact of earnings figures from the IBM computer giant.

Hopes of lower interest rates suffered a blow from stronger-than-expected fourth quarter gross domestic product data, perhaps indicating a soft landing rather than recession.

It was obviously the type of session when high flyers are picked off as investors snatch profits. Telecoms have led this

RUMOURS WERE flying that Rage Software is on the verge of linking with Microsoft over its football game, which is thought to involve Rund Guillit. The company refused to confirm the stories, merely saying it is in talks with four or five of the world's best known computer groups. The shares, with Seag putting turnover at 10 million, rose 2.5p to 12.25p.

year's Footsie charge, and not surprisingly it was the likes of Colt Telecom, suffering a 42p hit to 1.140p, and Telewest Communications, off 16.75p to 22.75p, in the firing line.

Turnover was balloonied by Energis share placing, conducted by HSBC. Sixty million shares were sold on behalf of National Grid at 1.650p. The offer was twice over-subscribed.

The placing – and the sale of what are called Equity Plus Income Convertibles – cuts Grid's shareholding in the telecom group to 49.5 per cent, thereby making Energis eligible for Footsie membership. Energis shares fell 112.5p to 1,600p and Grid 29.75p to 513.75p.

HSBC, said to be facing the possibility of making extensive provisions on its Thailand investments, lost a further 65p to 1,640p. Standard Chartered retreated 49p to 759.5p in sympathy.

MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN

Cable & Wireless had to contend with downgradings as well as the sudden fury of misdiagnosis. Morgan Stanley still gives the stock an "outperform" rating and has lifted its target price to 1,000p but no longer regards the shares as "a strong buy". Commerzland was much more negative – sell, was its advice. The shares lost 3.5p to 856.5p.

Supporting shares were battered. The mid cap index collapsed 46.7 points to 4,829.1 and the small cap gave up 12.2 to 2,093.1. Government stocks shone through the gloom helped by talk that the EU should ease conditions for Britain to join the single cur-

REFLAC, a tiny, battered and bruised group making reflective inks, was the best performing share, gaining 75 per cent to 3.5p. The excitement stemmed from settlement of a long running patent dispute which allows Reflec to manufacture and sell its reflective products. The shares, which arrived at 40p three years ago, had surged above 100p at one stage.

SHARE SPOTLIGHT
share price, pence

1400	COLT TELECOM
1200	
1000	
800	
600	
400	
200	
0	J F M A M J A S O N D

Source: Datastream

They scored gains of up to 50p.

Internet surfing was again largely unrewarding. Virtual Internet recovered 25p of Thursday's relapse to 230p but the rest of the bunch looked decidedly old-hat, with controversial On-Line down another 51.5p to 97.5p and Internet Technology 26p to 144p.

Takeover action let its mark

Even GRE, the Guardian Royal Exchange insurance group, finally emerged blinking into the harsh spotlight of the bid arena. After many false dawns following GRE's decision last year to talk to possible buyers, Royal & Sun Alliance – not the long-rumoured AXA or

each ordinary share and 440p for each "A". The ordinary shares rose 15p to 440p and the "A" 10p to 430p with Yorkshire shares a shade lower at 513.5p.

Servisair, an aircraft support group, flew 41p higher to 217.5p after rejecting a 200p a share offer from the Amey construction group. Wyndham Motor became the latest garage group to attract bid attention, advancing 35p to 145p.

Chemical group Albright & Wilson firmed 6.5p to 68.5p as management buyout stories again went the rounds.

Trading warnings sent Air Partner diving 86p to 180p and London Fortnighting 36p to 65.5p. Garton Engineering lost 31.5p to 115p on the back of disappointing profits, and Fortune Oil more than halved to 2p after forecasting a "substantial" loss.

SEAG VOLUME: 1.3 billion
SEAG TRADES: 73,227
GILTS INDEX:

JOHNSTON PRESS, the regional newspaper group, yesterday launched an offer to buy 25 per cent of rival Portsmouth & Sunderland Newspapers, valuing the group at £192m. It asked the Monopolies and Mergers Commission to investigate the implications of a full takeover.

In what is believed to be a unique move, Johnston bought 14.99 per cent of Portsmouth, which also operates a chain of convenience stores, including 11.4 per cent stake from PDMF, and launched a tender offer to buy a further 10 per cent.

The offer has been priced at 1600p per share – a 35 per cent premium to Portsmouth's closing share price on Thursday – and will close on Saturday 30 January. Portsmouth shares closed 1500p, up 315p.

Existing rules on newspaper ownership do not allow Johnston to own more than 24.99 per cent of Portsmouth without permission from the Government. The rules also state that a takeover of any newspaper

BY PETER THAL LARSEN
with a circulation of more than 50,000 must be investigated by the MMC. Two of Portsmouth's titles are above that threshold.

Johnston said it had approached Portsmouth last November with a proposal for an agreed takeover bid. However, the talks broke down on 15 December. Last night Portsmouth directors were formulating a response in discussions with Charterhouse, their financial advisers.

Johnston's step is the latest move in the consolidation of the regional newspaper industry that has taken place in recent years. In 1996 the company, whose titles include the *Falkirk Herald*, bought EMAP's regional newspaper interests. Last year, Johnston lost out on a bid for Home Counties Newspapers after another newspaper operator, Eastern Counties, stepped in while the MMC was investigating the matter.

"It would be a good fit geo-

graphically and we would expect there to be synergies," said Tim Bowdler, Johnston's chief executive. Analysts said Johnston's move would encourage rivals from entering the fray while the MMC was considering the takeover.

"It's not unsurprising considering the regional press needs to consolidate further," said Angela Maxwell, an analyst with Sutherland, the stockbroker. "The synergies would justify Johnston taking full control at some point. It would also expand their geographical coverage."

RUPERT LOWE, chairman of Southampton Leisure, yesterday warned its plans to develop a new stadium at St Mary's could be at risk if the Premier League football club were relegated. The group also unveiled a rise in interim profits before tax of £2.6m (£1.0m), primarily due to the profit on the disposal of players, but operating losses increased from £192,000 to £3.6m, which was attributed to the Bosman ruling restricting transfer fees in Europe. Net cash, however, was healthy at £4.9m and the club was looking for a striker, he added. The shares were unchanged at 41.5p.

CRH to sell builder's merchant

CRE, the Irish building materials group, has appointed Warburg Dillon Read to co-ordinate the sale of Keyline following its recent acquisition of Ibstock. Keyline, one of the top five UK builder's merchants, had record profits in 1998 and sales in excess of £300m, CRH added.

IN BRIEF

Fortune Oil shares crash

SHARES IN Fortune Oil, the UK oil company which operates in China, more than halved in price from 4.5p to 2p after the company warned of a substantial full-year loss. Fortune, which has built oil terminals and petrol stations, said it was hit by a Chinese ban on oil imports from non-favoured countries. Executives said they had the support of shareholders and would honour banking covenants.

Russia dents London Forfaiting

LONDON FORFAITING, the trade finance company, yesterday warned of a £57m operating loss in 1998, sending its shares down 35 per cent to 66.5p. The loss is due to problems in emerging markets, principally Russia, which forced the company to make an £80m downward valuation.

Football club warning

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Notice to Cardholders of Interest Change

Due to the change in Base Rate from 6.25% to 6.00%, your RBS Advanta Card interest rate for Purchases and Cash Advances will be amended accordingly from the first day of next month. Your interest rate margin

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Merger fever as Daimler talks to Nissan

BY MICHAEL HARRISON

Schrempp, and the president of Nissan, Yoshikazu Hanawa.

After the meeting the two companies issued a statement saying that their discussions had been constructive and that they had explored possible co-operation projects. Further

talks would take place in the near future.

At a later press conference, Mr Eaton fuelled speculation that a deal might be close by saying that DaimlerChrysler was "impatient" to strengthen its presence in Japan and Asia. "We want to go further and that could include producing right

here," said Mr Eaton. "That will rely on close co-operation with potential partners."

Although Nissan is the world's fourth-biggest carmaker, a one-third stake in the company would cost just £1.7bn. The stumbling block could be its enormous debts. Nissan has £12.5bn of official in-

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This information is listed by sector, not by company, in order to allow investors to define the comparative performance of their asset allocation.

Care is taken to ensure that the information provided by Bloomberg and Standard & Poor's Macmillan for the independent trustees is accurate.

and Standard & Poor's Macropal for the independent is correct, but neither warrant, represent or guarantee the contents of the information, nor do they accept any responsibility for errors, inaccuracies, omissions or any inconsistency herein.

Top five performing funds of each sector are highlighted in bold. All funds are more than one year old. Fund asset taken on the first day of the month we wrote. Fund performance as of 12/31/00.

the previous month. Fund performances are calculated on an Offer to Bid price basis with net income reinvested at bid date and illustrate the value of £100 original investment.

¹ Life Funds that are Closed to New Business have been excluded.
² denotes a fund available through a Manager's PEP scheme.

STANDARD Bloomberg

Saved by a sausage and other pleasant surprises

In MY opinion, Mr Micawber was right. Something always does turn up. Even the most unpromising circumstances can yield a newsworthy line. The important thing is to have faith. At the 1994 Winter Olympics in Lillehammer, Britain was agog – given the peak television figures of 23 million, perhaps that should be agog – over the fortunes of Jane Torvill and Christopher Dean as they sought to add a second ice dance title to the one they had won 10 years earlier in Sarajevo.

On the Saturday after the British pair had finished a disappointing third in the compulsory programme – the first of the three ice dance sections – it fell to a small group of British journalists, of whom I was one, to generate a Sunday newspaper story from a practice day.



MIKE
ROWBOTTOM

Dutifully, we gathered at the Hamar arena to witness the nation's love objects buckling down to work for the following day's crucial competition. Only they didn't, because at their designat-

ed hour they weren't on the ice. As deadlines loomed, the only feasible storyline began to take on a stridently judgmental, chauvinistic tone. It was not hard to imagine the likely headlines – "Torvill and Dean nowhere to be seen" (*Independent on Sunday*); "T and D fail to face the music" (*The Observer*); "A nation betrayed" (*Mail on Sunday*).

Then someone spotted the disconsolate pair in the canteen, nursing wounded pride and cardboard cups of coffee over a plastic table. Twenty minutes later the case was altered as Dean disarmingly admitted they would not have attempted to return to competition after a 10-year absence in the professional ranks had they known the reception they would receive from the Olympic judges. "I don't think it's

us," Torvill said. "It's just professionals. It's just a feeling..." "Like you shouldn't be here..." added Dean, wringing his hands.

Never mind the practice session. Here was a heart-rending story of two British champions abroad, struggling valiantly in the face of prejudice. Praise the Lord, and pass the sugar...

Such sudden strokes of fortune are even more vital for photographers. Sure, they can help each other out with the odd negative; but someone has to be where the action is in the first place, otherwise nothing.

At the 1994 Commonwealth Games in Auckland, the photographer with whom I was covering the event had been told to get a picture of the Kenyan runners, who were expected to run away with the

medals in the middle distance events. They were proving to be damned elusive fellows, giving the lie to the old adage "you can run, but you can't hide". After luging his gear around all the likely locations, including two practice tracks, my colleague decided to take a breather and contemplate the vista of the host city from the historical vantage point of One Tree Hill.

It is a location which has deep mystical significance in New Zealand. And as my friend wandered up its grassy side, he underwent a form of religious experience as he was confronted by a group of Kenyan middle distance runners pounding along the winding dirt track which encircled the peak.

Clickety clickety click. Thank you very much.

hard to believe he had once become sufficiently shirtless with his local newspaper to serve it with a writ preventing him from being described as the "speeding white sausage", a reference to the trademark, rubberised outfit he had worn during his triumphs. Sausages, clearly, were off the menu as far as Herr Hackl's questioning was concerned. Don't mention the sausage.

The gathering broke up as the man of the moment was summoned to the minibus detailed to take him to the evening medal ceremony. But before he departed, Hackl had time to drop into the German team hut for a brief, celebratory beer. He left to riotous applause, clutching in his hand a sandwich. A sausage sandwich. Result, as Mr Micawber would have said, happiness.

Cross-border collisions and no ring fences

Chris Hewett, Rugby Union Correspondent, offers a solution to the search for a viable future by the professional game's grandees

ACCORDING TO Francis Baron, the nearest thing Twickenham has to a no-nonsense tough guy, tomorrow week is "drop-dead decision day"; the final irrevocable cut-off point for agreement on the shape of next season's domestic fixture list. If the "drop-dead" reference is a trifle unfortunate, given that England's disillusioned rugby public would love to see the game's politicians do precisely that, Baron has at least earned himself a brownie point by slapping a time limit on all the whining and wingeing and windbagery. Assuming the chief executive of the Rugby Football Union stays true to his word, England's Premiership clubs have eight more days in which to shut up and put up.

The club owners, in the guise of the English First Division Rugby executive board, go into their huddle in London on Tuesday and it is by no means fanciful to place it among the most significant meetings in the brief, bloody history of professional union. If they get it right, they will be in clover; indeed, they might even turn a penny or two, somewhere along the line. If they get it wrong, they will probably spend most of next season in court – where, as we know only too well, the men in wigs will end up earning far, far more than the men in jockstraps.

Tom Walkinshaw of Gloucester, the EFDR chairman, is charged, along with his well-to-do colleagues, with agreeing a blueprint for the 1999-2000 campaign and selling it to the RFU and any other governing body registering an interest. No one is pretending they will have it easy. Next season has already been seriously complicated by a World Cup that wiped out much of the autumn and, as is usual in this game, there is a mountain of political baggage to be shed before consensus becomes a reality. Let alone a reality. Do the English want to play in the European Cup, or don't they? Do they want a British league? An Anglo-Welsh league? An all-English Premiership? What about Cardiff and Swansea? Where do the Welsh rebels stand? Answers on a postcard, please...

By way of preparing the debating ground, it is time to tell a few home truths, to call a spade a spade. In many ways, the financiers – the Nigel Wreys, the Andrew Brownswords and, yes, the Sir John Halls – deserve the support of all those who sidestep the Saturday afternoon trudge to Homebase in favour of paying good money at the gate to watch their local Premiership club. The owners have, after all, put their

own hands in their pockets and attempted to create something from the chaos unleashed by a hopelessly inept International Board in the summer of 1995. But there are dark forces at work among the money men and if the commercial hard-liners get their way, rugby's rank and file may as well give up the game as a bad job and dig out the Black & Decker Workmate.

A small but influential EFDR faction have turned protectionist. They are pushing for a ring-fenced Premiership elite, a top-eight league that would be the exclusive preserve of the very biggest clubs, effectively in perpetuity. They want to Americanise the sport, to save themselves the agonies and unpredictabilities of a relegation dog-fight by re-packaging the whole shooting match as a self-serving form of light entertainment. They want to see the backs of the likes of Bedford, West Hartlepool, London Scottish, even Sale. Why? Because they are not good for business. They have small crowds and even smaller bank balances. They are not, apparently, made of the right stuff.

All of which is anathema; it stinks to high heaven and it cannot be allowed to happen. Bedford may be absolutely brash, but they are in Premiership One on merit and until the receiver slams the Goldington Road door and turns the key, they have as legitimate a stake in the future as Saracens, Richmond or anyone else. The two-way principle – promotion and relegation, in common parlance – must remain sacrosanct. But it is obvious that a 14-team Premiership is too unwieldy to accommodate both a return to European competition and a long-term commitment to the Tetley's Bitter Cup. A leaner league format is the only solution.

No such format will include the Irish, who are happily ploughing their own furrow, and it should not include the Scots, who ought simply to acknowledge the lunacy of their "super team" experiment, return to their traditional district set-up and slip smugly into bed with Ulster, Munster, Leinster and Connacht. That leaves England and Wales to get it on in a cross-border club competition to die for. Cardiff and Bath at the Arms Park? Pontypool and Saracens at Sardis Road? Start queuing now for tickets.

How to proceed? Slowly. Avoid the temptation of rushing through the optimum 10-team version in time for next season. Undue haste would involve a vicious cull of the lesser lights, a flurry of solicitors' letters and, inevitably, more cynical takeover brinkmanship of the Bristol-London Scottish variety.

Far better to embrace all 14 current Premiership One teams, the two promoted sides from Premiership Two and the four major Welsh clubs, split them into conferences and give them the chance to compete for a place in the Real McCoy, which would get underway in September of next year rather than this.

The model proposed on this page is only one of countless alternatives, but it has the virtue of simplicity. The clubs have been grouped together alphabetically – what fairer system? – and would play each other home and away. A basic 18-match programme, topped off with a knockout finale for the eight leading sides, could be fitted into a truncated World Cup season and still leave room for European and domestic cup competition. There would be a silver pot on the end of it, of course, but more importantly still, the participants would know from the very outset that they were playing for their station in the brave new world. No ring-fencing and no chicanery. Just pure sport.

This conference system will be a one-off, covering the 1999-2000 season only. The top five sides from each conference will contribute a new 10-team Premiership One league beginning in September 2000. The bottom five from each conference will form the new Premiership Two, with promotion guarantees as follows: the Premiership Two champions will go up automatically, with the runners-up facing the second-from-bottom Premiership One side in a play-off. Below the Premiership, English and Welsh clubs will compete in separate national leagues. The champions of each will play off for the right to challenge the bottom club in Premiership Two, thus maintaining an open-door policy.

A UNION BLUEPRINT

Conference A	Conference B
Bath	Newcastle
Bedford	Northampton
Bristol	Pontypool
Cardiff	Richmond
Gloucester	Sale
Harlequins	Saracens
London Irish	Swans
London Scottish	Wes
London Welsh	West Hartlepool
London Scottish	Worcester

THE TOP FOUR clubs from each conference enter a knockout competition: the Conference A winners at home against the fourth-placed side in Conference B, and so on. The seeding system will stay in place for the semi-final, but the final will be played at a large-capacity neutral venue.

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Victory at The Stoop Memorial Ground would not only give Dick Best and Andy Keast, those renowned and respected former Harlequins, another gloriously vengeful night on the black stuff, but take the club into uncharted territory: the top three of the Allied Dunbar Premiership.

Only a fool would bet heavily against them domineering the oxygen mask and paying their first visit to high altitude. Not only does Best, frozen out of his top-dog job at Harlequins two years ago, consider it reasonable to omit such quality merchandise as Jarod Cunningham, Peter Rogers, Kieron Dawson

and Isaac Faa'una'i from his starting line-up, but he confidently expects further miracles from his very own magician, Steve Bachop.

The former All Black stand-off has been playing his trade in this part of the world for rather less than three months, yet he already has Player of the Season stamped on his forehead.

Bachop's half-back partnership with Kevin Purt was clearly a match made in heaven and with Brendan Venter, that ruffian of a Springbok centre, enjoying a real tear-up outside his fellow imports, the Irish midfield is bang on the money. Especially as Keast, who Best lands as one of the "very best backs coaches in world rugby" now has his

wide runners attacking the acres of space so inspirationally opened up by the little man at No 10.

"At the turn of the year, I thought we had lost too many early-season matches to have a chance of winning the league," confessed Best yesterday.

"Now I think it will be very tight come shoot-out time and, yes, we could be in there. Some of the obvious title contenders are quite fearful of our all-round game; we have an improving defence and some very productive midfield attackers in Bachop, Purt and Venter. We have fine goal-kickers, too."

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wide flanker this afternoon – a scarcely credible change of role that establishes him as the most versatile forward in the Premiership – and in an effort to neutralise his size and strength, Quins replace Rory Jenkins with the oft 2m Australian, Adam Leach. White form suggests an Irish victory; the over-enthusiastic visiting forwards will have to reduce their penalty count by a drastic degree if they are to complete the job. John Schuster, the most dependable marksman in the championship, has an 82 per cent strike rate and counting.

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Leicester, the leaders, will expect to see off the away-day failures from Gloucester without too much heartache, but Will Greenwood's

continued absence from the Tigers' midfield must be of serious concern to Clive Woodward, the England coach. Greenwood barely played at all before the World Cup qualifiers in November and thanks to a groin injury, he has not appeared since. Pat Howard and Stuart Potter pair up in the centre for today's outing.

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Carter much in demand

BASKETBALL

BY RICHARD TAYLOR

THE BUDWEISER League clubs, Manchester Giants and London Towers, are rivals for the signature of Ray Carter, but the England international is also the target for the Italian A2 club Trieste.

Carter, a 26-year-old, 6ft 4in play-maker, was sacked by his Austrian club Oberwart on Wednesday after the escalation of a dispute which began when they deducted wages for time he spent with the national team.

He said yesterday: "I'm leaning more towards a move to Italy, but need to know more about their team and how I would fit in."

"Trieste are pushing for promotion to A1, which the Italians plan to expand next season anyway."

He confirmed his agent had spoken with both Giants and Towers and did not completely rule out a move to the Budweiser League. "Other factors come into the equation with a move to England. I know more about the clubs and the players and it would obviously be a lot easier to settle."

"But I have only four months of this season left and have to make the right move. There's a great deal more exposure in Italy and even in A2 the standard of basketball is probably better."

Carter has never played for an English club after moving straight to the Continent after completing his American college education.

Two new American signings who will not play this weekend are Justin Phoenix and Adam McCanna. Neither Phoenix (Birmingham Bullets) nor McCanna (Worthing Bears) will receive work permits in time.

Reading ready to hit form

HOCKEY

BY BILL COLWILL

A DEPLETED Loughborough University travel to Reading today for their rescheduled EHA fifth-round Cup match. Manager Bob McBlane was putting on a brave face yesterday, but without four squad members who are sitting final examinations and their player-coach Jason Lee cup-tied, his side have a tough task.

"Reading's refusal to delay the start until 4pm, as requested by us, is disappointing, but it has fired us up and it could give us the edge," McBlane said.

The rearranged date also means that Reading will be without goalkeeper Simon Mason, who is at Kidderminster with the Millfield School Under-16 team, competing in the National Youth Indoor finals.

In a full National League programme tomorrow, leaders Canterbury entertain Beeston, while second-placed Cannock are at home to Guildford. Guildford will be boosted by the appearance of former Reading player Mark Hoskin, who signed for them over Christmas. A crucial game at the other end of the table will be the visit of Brooklands, who have no points, to the club directly above them, East Grinstead.

In Division One, where only the top team will go into a play-off for next year's Premier, all eyes will be on Chelmsford's new recruits.

Although seventh, the Essex club are four points behind leaders Doncaster and have recruited two South Africans in Craig Carolan, who has left Southgate where he was top goal-scorer last season, and midfielder Craig Fulton. They could provide the extra punch Chelmsford need for the final push.

Bachop makes the cut for bullish Irish

BY CHRIS HEWETT

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Airport row fails to faze top seed

LINDSAY DAVENPORT was in typically dominant form yesterday as she coasted into the fourth round of the Australian Open with a 6-0, 6-4 win over the Slovakian Karina Habsudova.

The American No 1 sped away with the first set in under 20 minutes. Afterwards she revealed she nearly did not even make it to Melbourne.

Davenport had to argue with airline staff to be allowed on a flight to Melbourne last week because no one recognised her. She had asked a Qantas airline employee why her closest rival had been able to board her flight with racquets in hand.

"Well, Mariana Hingis needs her racquet," the airline employee said. Alex Corretja suffered the same indignity.

"The lady said, 'Your racquets are too big. You can't take them on the flight,'" Davenport said, recounting what her strangest experience since becoming the world No 1 last year.

"She didn't know who Corretja and I were, and I'm saying 'hey'. We got into the biggest fight with the lady. We almost got a fine or something." In the end, Davenport and Corretja smuggled their racquets on board. "But it wasn't easy," she said.

A half-hour rain delay yesterday, during which time the centre court roof was closed, seemed to settle Habsudova for the second set and she held her first four service games. But then Davenport made the key break to go 5-4 up and wrapped up the match with some big forehand winners and an unbeatable smash on match point.

The only other seeds left in

TENNIS

By DERRICK WHYTE
in Melbourne

Davenport's half of the draw is 11th-seeded Belgian Dominique van Roost and fifth-seeded American Venus Williams, whom she might face in the quarter-finals.

Thomas Enqvist knocked out Pat Rafter 6-4, 6-4, 6-4 with a fearsome display of serving and tennis which serve-and-volley king Rafter was not able to answer.

"That's just the way it goes," Rafter said. "He played too big and too strong for me. There's a lot of top 10 players out there who aren't in the top 10. Unfortunately, it's not women's tennis."

The Swede's win guarantees that Pete Sampras will remain world No 1 for at least few more weeks. Sampras pulled out of the tournament because he was too exhausted after defending his ranking last year and Rafter had been the only player left in the men's draw able to knock him off his pedestal.

Rafter's repeated attempts to get up to the net were foiled by blistering forehand and backhand winners from Enqvist, who managed to keep the popular Australian pinned to the baseline.

The Wimbledon champion and world No 3, Jana Novotna of the Czech Republic, was another high-profile departure, falling 6-3, 6-0 to Maria Antonia Sanchez Lorenzo in an uncharacteristically docile display that handed the Spaniard by far the biggest

Venus Williams at full stretch in her victory over Roxandra Dragomir at the Australian Open yesterday AP

Scotland stages extra match

SUPER LEAGUE wants to beef up the game's efforts north of the border by staging a match on the same weekend as the ground-breaking Challenge Cup final at Murrayfield next year.

The Rugby League will stage the final in Edinburgh in April 2000, when Wembley is in the process of demolition and rebuilding. Now Super League is looking to move one of the Bank Holiday weekend's scheduled matches to Scotland.

Both organisations stress that the second game would be intended to complement, not compete with, the game's

RUGBY LEAGUE

By DAVE HADFIELD

biggest domestic occasion. "We would be in favour of anything that contributes to development in Scotland," said a League spokesman.

Super League took the match between the Bradford Bulls and the London Broncos at Tynecastle Park in Edinburgh last year and a crowd of more than 7,000 was one of the more encouraging aspects of the campaign of taking games far and wide.

BASKETBALL

The New York Knicks have acquired the troubled guard Latrell Sprewell, who was suspended for trying to choke his Golden State Warriors coach P J Carlesimo and who spent time in jail last year.

This year's new club, Gateshead Thunder, could win a trophy in their first match, the friendly at Castleford next Friday. "As it is our first outing

together we have no idea how we will fare," said Gateshead's chief executive, Shane Richardson. "Playing Castleford, a great traditional British rugby league club will give us a gauge of the standard we need to achieve."

Salford gave a debut to eight of their new signings in the friendly with Barrow last night. Salford's second match of the weekend, against Lancashire Lynx tomorrow afternoon, has been switched from Preston's Deepdale to Victoria Park in Chorley. The move is because of the state of the pitch.

Gateshead shot his second straight four-under par 67 for a three-shot lead after the second round of the South African Open here yesterday.

England's John Bickerton was second after a 66 for 137, with five players sharing third place on 138 - America's Scott Dunlap, South Africa's David Frost and Clinton Whitehall, Paul McGinley of Ireland and Britain's Mark Roe.

Nick Faldo, who failed to make the cut in last week's Alfred Dunhill PGA in Johannesburg, added a fighting par 71 to his overnight 70 to remain

in contention. Temperatures again rose above 30C and Roe offered some advice on how to prepare for the exhausting conditions.

"Take your clubs and waterpools to your local health club and sit in the sauna for five hours," he said.

In Florida, Laura Davies scored six birdies in a five-under-par round of 67 to head the British challenge in the

first round of the Naples LPGA Memorial at Pelican Strand, but she still trailed the leader Karrie Webb by four shots after a day of brilliant scoring.

Webb led by two from a group of seven players that included the leading European, Sweden's Liselotte Neumann.

Helen Dobson, who missed out on a top 10 place last week when she was disqualified in the final round, and Scot Janice Moodie completed the round on 68, one shot ahead of her compatriot Catriona Matthew.

Fred Funk took a two-stroke

lead in the Bob Hope Classic in Palm Springs, California on Thursday. Funk followed his first-round 65 with a 68 to move to 11-under.

John Daly, partnered by the recently retired basketball player Michael Jordan, compiled a 66, the day's lowest round. Another basketball player present was Charles Barkley, who signed a new contract with the Houston Rockets on the 10th tee before resuming play.

"It was awesome," Daly said. "We had a friendly game of golf."

Scores, Sporting Digest

Struver strides to the front

GOLF

By PETER STEADMAN
in Stellenbosch

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Olympic Games: The world's greatest spectacle may never recover from fall-out of the Salt Lake City bribes scandal

Murky tale of presents and prostitutes

BY PAUL LASHMAR

THIS MORNING the 11 top officials of the International Olympic Committee's executive board will assemble behind closed doors at the plush Olympics headquarters overlooking Lac Leman in Switzerland.

At the head of the table will be the small, haughty figure of the IOC president, the 79-year-old Spaniard Juan Antonio Samaranch - "The Guardian of the Olympic flame".

This august body has convened to hear explanations from IOC members involved in the bribes scandal surrounding the award of the 2002 Winter Olympics to Salt Lake City.

The IOC's own report into the scandal, compiled in the last month by its vice-president Richard Pound, is said to recommend disciplinary action including expulsion for up to 16 members. Pound, a Canadian, says there "is solid, irrefutable evidence" that IOC members or their relatives received cash, gifts, or donations from Salt Lake Olympic officials, in some cases more than \$100,000 (\$80,000).

On Sunday night, the IOC will rule on their fates. Whatever the IOC's decision it will cap what has been the most remarkable six weeks in the history of the Olympic movement.

More usually known as home of the Mormon religion, Salt Lake City has been reeling over the allegations that officials from its bid Committee used expensive gifts and sex to persuade the IOC to hold the Games in Utah. "Incentives", including college and athletic scholarships for relatives of IOC members, free medical insurance and other gifts are all said to have been used to try to clinch that particular race. On American TV, the Olympic corruption story has been running second only to the Clinton impeachment.

Those accused include Jean-Claude Ganga, a 64-year-old IOC member. In the run up to the 1995 bid decision, Ganga, a former ambassador from the Congo, is said to have made \$60,000 profit on a land deal in Utah arranged by a member of the Salt Lake bid committee. The organisers also gave him \$50,000 to help feed children in his war torn homeland, and published reports have linked Ganga to a total of \$70,000 from Salt Lake officials. He and his mother also received medical care paid for by the committee.

Another in the frame is Bashir Mohammed Attarabusi, the 61-year-old IOC member from Libya. His son, Suhel, admits that he received tuition at Brigham Young University and other Utah schools, plus \$700 a month for expenses, from both the Salt Lake bid and organising committees. At least Attarabusi did the decent thing yesterday and

resigned from the IOC. Mahomed El-Garmawani, a "vote broker" has admitted that he had assured the IOC's Arab vote for Salt Lake City in return for \$58,000.

But what started as a local scandal in Utah is now spreading like a bushfire that threatens to engulf the whole Olympic movement. The Games are run by the International Olympic Committee, an independent international body based in Lausanne with members chosen from across the world. Its ruling body consists of some 100 or so individuals (just seven are women). It is this group that cities must impress. The largess of competing cities over recent years is only now becoming clear.

The Olympics are big bucks. In the last 20 years commercialisation of the Games has been rampant. The

'In the closed world of the IOC, bidding cities and sports federations, it is taken as read that at least one IOC member in 10 is as bent as a nine-bob note'

huge costs of running the event are offset by a dozen key sponsors. Coca-Cola, for example, pays huge sums to put the five ring Olympic symbol on its products during Olympics year. The American TV NBC network is to pay \$3.55bn for the exclusive American rights to broadcast five winter and summer Games. The four-year Olympic cycle is estimated to generate some \$10bn. With this kind of money washing around, the temptation to get a piece of the action is powerful.

The IOC has presented itself as reflecting the finest and most lofty human ideals. Now the image is shattering and what is showing through is not just a long-running gravy train, but the full chateaubriand, dauphinoise and gravy train for its 100 person elite. The inner politics of the IOC are more reminiscent of a Byzantine court than an ancient Greek ideal.

In the middle of December, as the Salt Lake City allegations flared, Marc Hodler, an IOC member, poured petrol on the blaze of bad publicity. Hodler astonished his colleagues at what was meant to be a routine weekend meeting at the Lausanne headquarters. In a series of impromptu press briefings, Hodler, 81, an IOC vice-president and

chairman of the IOC finance commission, made startling allegations including that there were four agents who, for a commission of between \$500,000 and \$1m, offered to deliver blocks of votes to bidding cities. The agents, one of whom is an IOC member, charged the winning city between \$3m and \$5m. Losing cities had told Hodler of a list of IOC members who can be bought. For the first time a member of the inner elite broke ranks and made allegations of widespread corruption in the movement.

Samaranch, the IOC's president, ordered Hodler not to talk to the press. An unshaven Hodler emerged from the IOC HQ dazed by a weekend's momentous events. Asked if he had been silenced, he made a motion across his lips like a zip and said, "Exactly, I have been muzzled. Apparently I said too much."

The IOC asked Dick Pound, a Canadian lawyer, to investigate the Salt Lake City allegations. The IOC's investigators were joined by four other investigation teams, including the FBI. The US Olympic Committee asked Senator George Mitchell, fresh from his role in the Northern Ireland peace negotiations, to lead their inquiry.

Samaranch also announced a number of reforms in the way host cities are to be selected in future. IOC members would not expect to visit a bidding city more than twice.

But then Samaranch himself came into the frame and admitted that he had received an inscribed pistol and a rifle on two separate visits to Salt Lake City. The gift of the guns, said to be worth a total of around \$2,000, appears to be a contravention of IOC guidelines, which ban officials from accepting any gift worth more than \$150. Samaranch defended himself by saying: "This limit is for the members who participate in the elections. I do not take part in the voting and the elections."

The president of the Salt Lake Organising Committee, Frank Joklik, and the vice-president, Dave Johnson, stood down in the first week of January. On Tuesday a Finnish IOC member, Pirjo Haeggman, an Olympic champion, resigned rather than risk expulsion for being implicated in the scandal, and then yesterday Attarabusi followed suit.

On the same day it re-emerged that at least two IOC members accepted offers of prostitutes from a bid committee trying to land the 1992 Olympic Games for Amsterdam. Prince Frederic von Saxe-Lauenberg said: "I was there [in 1986] and saw it, IOC members were offered women and two accepting."

Graham Stringer, then leader of Manchester City Council, was involved in both the City's failed bids for the Olympic Games. Now an MP, he says: "In the closed world of the IOC, bidding cities and sports federations, it is taken as read that at least one IOC member in 10 is as bent as a nine-bob note." Others, more radically, have suggested that there are only seven straight IOC members.

The person probably most responsible for the IOC's current travails worked outside this closed world. For nearly 10 years, Andrew Jennings, a British investigative journalist who has worked for the BBC and was a *World in Action* reporter, has been investigating the Olympics. He has now quite spoiled the cosy arrangement whereby the Olympics were portrayed as glamorous and honourable event.

Besides TV programmes and articles, Jennings has produced two books exposing Olympic wrongdoing. The most recent "The New



Juan Antonio Samaranch, the IOC president, hands over the Olympic flag to Deedee Corradini, the mayor of Salt Lake City, watched by Tesuku Tsukada, Nagano's mayor, at the closing ceremony of the 1998 Winter Olympics held in Nagano. Reuters

Lord of the Rings" was published in 1996 to coincide with the Atlanta Olympics. Jennings' revelations would be funny if they were not so appalling. He dubbs the IOC as the "Holidays R Us club of Lausanne".

Jennings revealed that Samaranch was a paid up Blueshirt politician under Franco's fascist regime in Spain. Samaranch was co-opted onto the IOC in 1966 and became its president in 1980. His left manoeuvrings in the pursuit of power are best shown by one little story. In 1966, the IOC had brought in a mandatory retirement age of 72. Samaranch evaded this retirement

problem to renew his presidency. In 1996, canvassing began for a change to the retirement age so that he could stand again in 1997.

When the IOC voted, they failed to change the rule to Samaranch's benefit. Undaunted Samaranch organised a new onslaught or as Jennings puts it: "The things went into action the next day." Samaranch's close admirers, including Ganga, who is currently under suspicion, persuaded other IOC members to vote in favour of the boss. This time the rule was changed. Samaranch is scheduled to remain as president until 2001 when he will be 81.

Samaranch's heir apparent is the South Korean IOC member, Mickey Kim. Jennings demonstrates that Kim was a long-time agent for the Korean CIA, an organisation noted for its ruthlessness.

What all these investigations show is that IOC corruption and freeloading are not new. When claims over Salt Lake City hit the headlines, the IOC ordered an inquiry and tried to portray it as a little local difficulty an aberration. In practice Samaranch and everyone else in the IOC has known all about the extensive corruption in the Olympic movement for many years.

As much has now been demonstrated, Prince Frederic von Saxe-Lauenberg, who is a spokesman for the Pierre de Coubertin Committee in Lausanne, a volunteer group that supports the Olympic movement, said on Thursday that knowledge about bribery and inducements offered to IOC officials went right "to the top". He said: "The reason why I know it goes to the top is my friend Jan Stabro and Gerhard Heiberg of Norway have reported directly to the president that they have been offered bribes and inducements. Samaranch didn't take any action."



Frank Joklik (left), president of Salt Lake City's Organising Committee, and the IOC's Libyan member, Bashir Mohammed Attarabusi, are the first victims of the bribes scandal

A little insulation wire goes a long way on the icy Coln

WHEN WINTER settles right in, and the ground crunches underfoot, it is time to go fishing for grayling. These fine, silver fish (genus name *Thymallus thymallus*) provide particularly fine sport when other game fish are out of bounds; although it is not just in winter that you can catch them. Last July, on the Test, I caught nothing but grayling, despite aiming for brown trout. It is highly fitting that these fish are almost as shiny silver as stainless steel, because the best time for catching them is when the landscape matches their outfit.

So it was that, wearing two sets of thermal longjohns and 17 other layers on top of them, I waddled on to the Coln's riverbank in Gloucestershire. There are times I wonder why I am a fishing correspondent. Why I would choose to do this

ANNALISA BARBIERI ON FISHING



rather than say, be Cuban cigar correspondent and report back from the warmth of the fireside with a single Speyside malt clinking in a crystal tumbler. How many times I asked myself this question that day, I also had to finally concede that wellingtons are crap for keeping feet warm. I have tried them with 10 socks, no socks and only one pair of socks, and they still chill your feet to sub-zero temperatures within five

minutes. Never mind wine coolers, bodies should just be put in warming boxes and they would reach perfect drinking temperature sharpish.

I had last been to the Coln in September and, boy, had she put on weight over Christmas. She had flooded her banks and filled out rather a bit too much. The first day there, the water was too coloured to fish, although I tried. But even if I had lobbed my torch in, I doubt the

fish would have seen it, so soupy was the river.

Back in July when I attended an Orvis course taken by fishing supremo Oliver Edwards, Oliver dredged the river bed. One of the most interesting things I saw was the peeing caddis. There are two main types of caddis: case-making or free-living. The case-making ones make shell-like homes for themselves when they get to the pupation stage of their little insect lives. They do this by gathering tiny bits of the river bed: gravel, twigs, sand grains. Imagine a blind potter with a penchant for patchwork pottery grabbing whatever comes to hand and sticking it all together, and you'll get the idea. The caddis live in these cases for 30 to 40 days, during which time the larva breaks down and reconstructs itself into a

proper winged grown-up. When the caddis is ready it hatches out of the case and, as it struggles to freedom, it crawls along the river bed with the soon-to-be-discarded case hanging off its bottom. This is what a Peeping Caddis flies.

Pete had never seen a real peeing caddis so I was technical advisor. We were limited by materials and my suggestion of opening up a plug, stripping some of the insulation wire out, threading that on to a hook and sticking bits of gravel on to it was met with a raise of the eyebrow. Instead Pete took a size 10 long-shank hook, wound touching

turns of lead all the way down the body and then made a cylindrical body of dubbed moles' fur. The feelings were made out of mottled partridge feathers. This is not how Oliver would make his, but we're doing the best with what we had.

For reasons best known to myself, I refused to fish with the Peeping Caddis the next day, instead lying on a Gold Head Killer Bug. I even tried my summer favourite, the Parachute Black Gnat, which was a stupid thing to do. When it is that cold, fish are terribly lethargic and rarely rise to the surface to feed (although a couple did, but not to my fly). My day ended with no fish.

This was hardly a surprise, because apart from pig-headedness using the wrong fly, I should have been using a sink tip and wasn't. I

should also have had my fly — any fly, even the wrong one — in the water for longer than I did. But my fishing was punctuated by having to do star jumps (far from the bank) to reintroduce feeling into my extremities. Pete, feeling no cold like only boys can, caught a very beautiful brown trout on his Peeping Caddis, which he saw safely back into the water. Sadly, his rod spontaneously snapped in two at the end of the day, maybe it was not meant to be used in sub-zero temperatures. I finished my day, rod intact, eating a fine steak and kidney pudding that warmed all parts of me very nicely indeed.

Apologies, two weeks ago there was a misprint. The correct telephone number for the Flyfisher's Classic Library is: 01364 653828. a.barbieri@independent.co.uk

PUNTERS' GUIDE

Tiutchev can rise to the occasion

The former top jump jockey
Steve Smith Eccles analyses
today's Lanzarote Hurdle

Shankar: Can be temperamental and is hard to fancy on his first outing of the season. **Serenus:** Sure to run a big race for a stable in cracking form. One to fight out the minor placings.

Tiutchev: The likely winner on the evidence of his good second to Bold Gait at Newbury on his seasonal debut. Travelling well, a winner until falling here last time. **Davoski:** As consistent as they come and placed in all seven of his novice hurdles. He will find this handicap a huge leap, however.

Young Spartacus: Up-and-coming sort who loves soft ground but steps up in class.

Frogsong: I will give up rac-

ing if this one makes the frame.

Mister Kim: Has not shown the form to warrant consideration.

Nordlands: At 10 years of age and racing from out of the handicap, this veteran should be bringing up the rear.

Aika International: Not a player.

Conclusion: The progressive TIUTCHEV is the one I would like to be riding. My only fear is his fall at Kempton may have dented his confidence but if he has put that out of his mind the £20,000 can be his. Serenus can claim minor prize-money for the inform Nicky Henderson stable.

BETTING: 4-6 Whitehead, 7-9 Lucy Rose, 10-1 Prince Tece, 11-1 Muttamasi, 13-1 Langton, 25-1 Prairie Indian, 33-1 Fenton De Koury, King Daddy

1998: King's Measure 5-1 & Wyer 2-1 for J. Jenkins

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Blowing Wind (245)

12.45 NORTH WEST RACING CLUB NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) £22,000 added 2m 4f Penalty Value £22,341

- 221 WINDROSS (28) (Mr Peter Prothero) D Nicholson 7 11 ... A Maguire
- 472* FANION DE NOURRY (28) (Mr A McDonald) T Colclough 6 11 ... D Fort 8
- 420* KING PADDY (28) (Mrs S A Evans) Ms J Williams 7 11 ... T Tizzard
- 5 LANGAN (28) (R Holland) R Hollinshead 6 11 ... Gary Lyons
- 21 LYKIE ROSS (28) (H) Racing H Day 8 11 ... S Whynes
- 4 P-MUTANABASHI (28) (Mr John M Pipe) M Pipe 6 11 ... T Murphy
- 50-00 PRARIE INDIA (28) (Lady Anne Doherty) C Doherty 6 11 ... M Doherty
- 6-5F PRINCE TOR (28) (J. Coddle) S Bookbath 6 11 ... A Doherty
- 004-2 TWO LORDS (28) (P J Kennedy) M Tye 7 11 ... R Ballamy
- 08-05 THE POLICAT (28) (Mrs Douglas Graham) W Jenkins 7 11 ... R Ballamy

-10 declared -

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FORM VERDICT

WINDROSS may not have been much at Warwick but it was difficult not to be impressed with the style of his victory, and he should defy a 5lb penalty in what appears an ordinary race. Lucy Rose is likely to follow him home.

BETTING: 11-10 Fourth In Line, 9-4 Tiutchev, 7-1 Gutteridge, 8-1 Gallois Taffy, 14-1 Scratches Cross

1998: Danielas 3 11 12 A P McCoy (11) (M Pipe) 4 m

1.5-10 FOURTH IN LINE (21) (D) (John Nichols) Ms J Williams 11 12 ... M Williamson

2.300 GLITTERIDGE (19) (C) (Goldsack) P Evans 11 12 ... G Vandy

3.8-21 FIDDLER (20) (Mrs G. Palmer) Mr Palmer 11 12 ... S Whynes

4.19-23 TALLANT TAFFY (19) (Malcolm B Jones) M Pipe 6 11 ... T Murphy

5.00-05 SCRATCH CROSS (28) (Mrs John Hegarty) J J O'Neill 6 11 ... R McGehee

-5 declared -

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2.300 GLITTERIDGE (19) (C) (Goldsack) P Evans 11 12 ... G Vandy

3.8-21 FIDDLER (20) (Mrs G. Palmer) Mr Palmer 11 12 ... S Whynes

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McCartney's war on Brum burgers

FOOTBALL'S TRADITIONAL food fare of beef burgers and meat pies comes under a massive attack from the vegies tomorrow week when none other than Sir Paul McCartney makes a guest appearance at St Andrew's in aid of an "Eat Veggie at Football Matches Campaign". Up to 20,000 fans at the Birmingham City v Bradford City game will sample the delights of vegetarianism for free.

Sir Paul will be on the pitch beforehand to launch his wife Linda's vegetarian range which, according to Birmingham managing director Karren Brady, "might turn into something more spectacular". Perhaps he will sing for his supper: The Beatles' "White Album" was re-released as a CD over Christmas, although one can safely assume he will not be performing the number entitled "Piggies", more likely "Honey Pie".

A more appropriate track still might be "Yer Blues". After all, back in the 1960s, Sir Paul professed to be a supporter like his father of those other blues on Merseyside. It would certainly not be his first appearance at a football stadium; he still holds the record for the largest paying audience for a show by a solo performer - 184,000 at the Maracana stadium in Rio nine years ago.

Steve Beacham, of the Football Supporters' Association, welcomed the dietary change for fans. "Supporters would relish the alternative to fast food normally available," he said. "A lot of food at football matches leaves much to be desired."

SOME LIGHT has been thrown on the timing of John Rudge's sacking as Part Vale's manager by an item in this week's *Nationwide League Newsletter*. Under the headline "Vale Part discoun't for the jobless", the newsletter tells how the struggling First Division side gave discounts to fans for last week's home game against Swindon.

"Out of work football supporters from the Potteries watched at a dramatically reduced price on production of their unemployment card," the newsletter says. Each unemployed adult was guaranteed a £4 reduction in the normal price and could take two accompanying children into the match for nothing.

WE KNOW that Alessandro Pistolesi received a sheep's heart from a Newcastle team-mate at the club's Christmas party ("It's a heart because you

haven't got one," he was told) and that Alan Shearer got a Mary Poppins doll, but what of the Swede Andreas Andersson? Sheep's brains perhaps. A group of his fellow countrymen, all clients of Newcastle Breweries, were invited over to watch the recent match against Chelsea and later that evening bumped into Andersson at a club, whereupon they explained to him how they had been the breweries' guests at the game and had generally been shown a good time by Newcastle's sponsor. To which Andersson replied: "Oh yeah, and which brewery is that?"

Vale lost the game and Rudge, with barely a thought for his 15 years' loyal service, was dismissed. One can only presume he wasn't sent packing before kick-off because the club wouldn't have been able to afford the subsidy on his ticket if he had attended.

SONG SHEET

Millwall fans get perceptive

“No one likes us,
No one likes us,
No one likes us,
We don't care.
We are Millwall,
Super Millwall.
No one likes us,
We don't care.”

Judge: I am selling

IF PUSH comes to shove, so to speak, an FA tribunal may be called upon to rule in the dispute between Paolo di Canio and Sheffield Wednesday over the £100,000 in wages which the club has docked and the £90,000 imposed in fines on the player since he went AWOL on 12 December. The Italian has compiled a six-page dossier which outlines how the club has allegedly failed him since his suspension for the shove on referee Paul Alcock. Included among the list of heinous "crimes" is a claim that Di Canio's famous white boots went missing from the club's training ground.

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haven't got one," he was told) and that Alan Shearer got a Mary Poppins doll, but what of the Swede Andreas Andersson? Sheep's brains perhaps. A group of his fellow countrymen, all clients of Newcastle Breweries, were invited over to watch the recent match against Chelsea and later that evening bumped into Andersson at a club, whereupon they explained to him how they had been the breweries' guests at the game and had generally been shown a good time by Newcastle's sponsor. To which Andersson replied: "Oh yeah, and which brewery is that?"

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TOP TRIVIA FROM THE FA CUP FOURTH ROUND

WOLVES V ARSENAL

ON FOUR different occasions, Arsenal have beaten Wolves and gone on to reach the FA Cup final.

OXFORD V CHELSEA

IN THE 1990-91 season, Oxford defeated Chelsea 3-1 at Stamford Bridge in the third round of the Cup, when the former were in the Second Division and the latter were in the top flight.

NEWCASTLE V BRADFORD

WHEN BRADFORD beat Newcastle in the 1911 FA Cup final, they became the first winners of the new FA Cup trophy, which was made by Messrs Fattorini and Sons of Bradford and cost 50 Guineas.

MAN UTD V LIVERPOOL

THE TWO sides have met twice in the fourth round of the FA Cup before. In 1948, United won 3-0, and in 1960 they were 3-1 victors at Anfield.

EVERTON V IPSWICH

ON ALL four occasions that Everton have beaten Ipswich in the FA Cup, the Merseysiders have progressed to at least the semi-finals.

MY TEAM



BRIAN MOORE

Former television football commentator

"My love affair goes back to 1946 when I saw Gillingham at the Priestfield Stadium against Bath City in the old Southern League. We had 7,000 that day and I can even remember where I was standing. I'll never forget how I queued from 9.30 in the morning for an FA Cup third round tie against QPR in 1948. The Priestfield Stadium had 23,000 for that game. I'm currently writing my autobiography and I've listed my top six matches. The best was Gillingham's FA Cup tie against Everton when we drew at Goodison in 1984. My favourite Gillingham players were Jimmy Boswell and Hughie Russell. It's a grand little club!"

IN T'NET

Found on the Web: Football dream analysis. Whether you dream of Ulrika Jonsson in your team's away kit eating pies on the top deck of a bus or of Michael Owen, dressed as a chicken and flying around your primary school yelling "I'm considerably richer than you", go to this sub-site of the *When Saturday Comes* pages and find out what it all means. Enter your unconscious football-related experiences and within days a range of experts will have analysed your innermost yearnings and told you just how messed-up supporting your side has made you. Fans with heart problems, nervous disorders and stress (and those who follow Nottingham Forest, who probably suffer from all three) should proceed with caution.

SEEN BUT NOT BOUGHT

With Swansea doing so well in the FA Cup, you can buy Cyril the swan's lunchbox for £5.99 from the club shop. For those wanting something more substantial, an 18in Cyril will set you back £15.99. "It's been passed by the trade and safety people," a spokeswoman said of the fluffy Cyril replica. "It's a very good toy for anyone," she added with a flourish.

THEY'RE NOT ALL DENNIS BERGKAMP

Unsung foreign legionnaires No 23
LOMANA TRESOR LUA LUA: The 18-year-old Zaire-born right winger grew up in France but has lived in Britain for several years. He was first spotted playing for a university team in London, and Colchester signed him recently on an 18-month contract before any bigger sides had any notion of his burgeoning talent. Luu Luu's strong points, according to a Colchester spokesman, are his speed and dribbling ability. Having served a short apprenticeship in the youth team, the teenager has now made two substitute appearances for the first team, and scored within minutes of making his debut two weeks ago when coming on as a late substitute against Chesterfield. Not only a bright prospect, Luu Luu is not a man to be messed with - he has a black belt in karate.



Porter brought down to size but Bazza still rules

THERE CAN'T be many chat show guests whose opening gambit is to inquire after their host's apparently non-existent sex life, but Richard Cockerill had done his homework when he and his England rugby union team-mate Martin Johnson appeared on *Not Melinda's Big Night In* (Channel 5, Wednesday), presented by the eponymous Ms Messenger's stand-in, a wee Scotswoman called Gail Porter.

Porter had kicked off promisingly, overwhelmed by Johnson's sheer bulk (in fact Johnson would go down a storm, as it were, at Bulk itself, the London club for big gay men and those who have a thing for big gay men. But don't tell him I said so).

"You're so big," Porter cried. "You know what big hands mean."

CHRIS MAUME

SPORT ON TV



I know what big hands are supposed to mean (or is it big feet, or a big nose?) but Porter was referring to the difficulties in procuring gloves that fit.

"I don't know anything about rugby," she confessed indeed, some evidence of a researcher's budget would have improved the programme immeasurably. Porter's all-too-frequent protestations of ignorance reeked less of Zoo-TV spontaneity than of a more straightforward amateurishness.

"We've read all about you on the way down on the train," interjected Cockerill. "Was that in *Reader's Digest*?" Porter wondered.

"There was one quote that said you haven't had sex for 18 months," Cockerill persisted. "Is that true?" "As I said," Porter went on, "I don't know much about rugby."

"Or about sex," said Johnson. He

demonstrated his sharpness later on, too, when Porter asked: "Will Carling. Is he a bit of a donkey?"

"That's not the word on the autocue," said Johnson, inducing blushes from Porter. Heaven knows what the actual word was.

Porter may be the new Melinda Messenger, but she certainly isn't the new Barry Davies. Bazza has been badly missed on *Match of the Day* lately, but at least the BBC have given him something decent to do, sending him to Melbourne for the Australian Open tennis (highlights, BBC2, Monday-Friday).

If it was up to me, they'd have him fronting everything. He'd be presenting *On Side* instead of John Inverdale, *Sunday Grandstand* instead of Ray Stubbs, the indoor bowls instead of David Rhys-Jones.

Match of their Day instead of John Motson and *Sporting Greats* instead of Garth Crooks. Not to mention *Crimewatch*, *Top of the Pops*, *Question Time*, *Teletubbies* and *Late Review*. Make it *Bazza's House Party* and I'd even watch that (there is a sporting element to tonight's edition, apparently, but I hesitate to say more in case I encourage anyone to tune in. I once had a bad experience, you see, that involved *Noel's House Party* and the day room of a psychiatric ward, but you don't want to know about that).

The brilliant *Big Train* comedy series written by the *Father Ted* people recently had Bazza doing the commentary for the World Starling Championships. A significant choice - the makers obviously

realised that as the most intelligent and cultured of all TV sports people, he was easily the best equipped to pull it off, and so he did, deadpanning to perfection.

Though he has mastered several sports in his illustrious career, Bazza's footing is less sure in the tennis commentary box, but he sensibly leaves the technical stuff to his match analyser, concentrating instead on the evidence he can comment on with ease - character, motivation, mood, aggression, the extent to which a player is "up for it". There was also plenty of time available for some of his extravagant metaphors, although during Greg Rusedski's exit at the hands of the American Paul Goldstein, he found himself upstaged by Chris Bailey.

As the second-set tie-break

tortuously unfolded, Bailey set off for the distant horizon. "Have you ever been to Magic Mountain, Barry?"

"Yes," responded Davies, in a tone that conveyed several messages. "Of course I have, dear boy, but where precisely is this going?" was one. But the more forceful implication was "Hold it, sonny. Fancy-dan metaphors are my department."

And fancy-dan it was too, over-spent rather than extravagant. "Does this match not remind you of Magic Mountain?" Bailey went on. "You're totally in the dark and you haven't got a clue where it's going. The match so far is so stultifying from Greg, and you really are in the dark, waiting for the next drop or the next high, with all the twists and turns in-between." A case of leave it to Bazza, I think.

TODAY	
FOOTBALL	
FA CUP THIRD-ROUND REPLAY	3-0 unless stated
1. Wolves v Liverpool	Wednesday
2. Sheffield Wednesday v Bristol City	Wednesday
3. Southend v Sunderland	Wednesday
4. Leicester v Leyton Orient	Wednesday
5. Derby v Middlesbrough	Wednesday
6. Wolverhampton v Ipswich	Wednesday
7. Blackburn v Bradford	Wednesday
8. Southampton v Leeds (all return)	Wednesday
9. Sheffield United v Newcastle	Wednesday
10. Sheffield Wednesday v Stockport	Wednesday
11. Cardiff v Bury	Wednesday
12. Walsall v Barnsley	Wednesday
13. Wimbledon v Tottenham	Wednesday
14. Wigan v Middlesbrough	Wednesday
15. Wimbledon v Huddersfield	Wednesday
SECOND DIVISION	
1. New Brighton v Alloa	Wednesday
2. Wrexham v Preston	Wednesday
3. Colchester v Northampton	Wednesday
4. Leeds v Wigan	Wednesday
5. Millwall v Doncaster	Wednesday
6. Grimsby v Colchester	Wednesday
7. Walsall v Bradford	Wednesday
8. Shrewsbury v Scunthorpe	Wednesday
9. Walsall v Chester	Wednesday
10. Walsall v Darlington	Wednesday
11. Walsall v Peterborough	Wednesday
12. Walsall v Plymouth	Wednesday
13. Walsall v Port Vale	Wednesday
14. Walsall v Wrexham	Wednesday
15. Walsall v Bradford	Wednesday
THIRD DIVISION	
1. Stretford v Shrewsbury	Wednesday
2. Brayton v Scarborough	Wednesday
3. Brayton v Chester	Wednesday
4. Brayton v Darlington	Wednesday
5. Brayton v Peterborough	Wednesday
6. Brayton v Plymouth	Wednesday
7. Brayton v Walsall	Wednesday
8. Brayton v Port Vale	Wednesday
9. Brayton v Wrexham	Wednesday
10. Brayton v Bradford	Wednesday
FOOTBALL CONFERENCE	
1. Wrexham v Northwich	Wednesday
2. Wrexham v Luton	Wednesday
3. Wrexham v Hereford	Wednesday
4. Wrexham v Southport	Wednesday
5. Wrexham v Fleetwood	Wednesday
6. Wrexham v Rotherham	Wednesday
7. Wrexham v Morecambe	Wednesday
8. Wrexham v Barrow	Wednesday
SCOTTISH CUP	
SECOND-ROUND REPLAY	
1. Paisley v Queen's Park	Wednesday

Chelsea join hunt for Di C

THE INDEPENDENT Saturday 23 January 1999

SWANSEA'S FA CUP hero Martin Thomas, devastated at missing today's fourth round tie against Derby County at The Vetch, at least had one bit of good news this week when the shirt which was stolen after the replay against West Ham was anonymously returned to him in a plastic bag with a note saying "Sorry". Thomas, who had knee and hernia operations yesterday, had appealed for the return of the shirt when it went missing from the dressing room after he scored the winner against the Hammers. Rio Ferdinand can be ruled out as the thief, having happily given the Welshman his own shirt at the end of the game.

AS YOU WERE

THE SWEEPER

BY CLIVE WHITE AND NICK HARRIS

AS YOU WERE

THE SWEEPER'S CUP OF PLENTY

LIBERO IMAGERS

■ SUNDAY SKY MATCH
Middlesbrough v Liverpool
Middlesbrough (2, 10-11, Stanley)
■ SUNDAY CA 4 ITALIAN JOB
Bologna v Milan
Bologna (2, 8-5, Stanley)
■ MONDAY SKY MATCH
Oxford v Watford
Oxford (2, 6-9, William Hill & Stanley).
■ SUNDAY ITV MATCH
Wolves v Arsenal
Arsenal Draw (2, 13-5, Ladbrokes).
CURRENT KITTY: £151.72!
TODAY'S BETS: £21.80 (includes £1.80 tax).

Hannah

ELTINS' 'Air Versatile', David Hannah, is ready to pitch in to what he believes will be a battle royal today as the Scottish champions seek to avoid double knock-out disappointment at the hands of Airdrie, writes Bryn Palmer

The Parkhead side have already succumbed to the First Division outfit once this season, losing to a single-goal at the Sherry Excelsior stadium in their defence of the League Cup. Hannah missed out on that miserable Lanarkshire night as he has done on numerous occasions this season in a prolonged struggle to win a regular

Hollins' Swans no longer ugly ducks

A former Chelsea hero can maintain the revival at Vetch Field with today's FA Cup fourth-round visit of Derby. By Glenn Moore

WHEN THE eight-foot swan arrived in John Hollins' office, pursued by a Sun reporter chasing an exclusive interview – with Sidney the Swan not Hollins, it was time to leave. Now things were really getting crazy.

It was nutty enough when I had arrived an hour earlier. "Have a seat, take your coat off," Hollins said, "and your jacket, and you might want to take everything else off, too."

Had Swansea City's epic FA Cup victory over West Ham, which earned them today's fourth round tie with Derby County, gone to Hollins' head? Or was it the "glamour" calendars discreetly hidden around the corner, above the desk of his assistant, Alan Curtis? No, the problem was the heating.

Due to a long-standing thermostat problem the City manager had two choices. Shiver with the heating off, or sweat with it on. He is thus the only manager with an office sauna (at least until Big Ron hears about it) and that, not the golden beach at Mumbles, may be what he means when he recently compared Swansea to Marbella.

But it appeared to come at a price. As Hollins dug a beer out of the fridge – all in the line of duty, it was to prevent me becoming too parched to ask questions – I looked around his desk. There, alongside the usual managerial paraphernalia – a copy of *Rothmans*, a pile of paperwork – was a collection of stamps torn from their envelopes. The financial problems of lower divisions clubs are well known but this took the biscuit: were Swansea so hard up that they had to collect used stamps to pay the heating bill?

Not so, Hollins said, he was saving them for a member of staff who collected them for charity. Swansea may have fallen a long way since the heady years when John Toshack took them into the top flight 20 years ago but they are not that desperate. Indeed, the Third Division side are in better health than for some time.

After two years of boardroom wrangles and managerial change the club is on the rise. A new ground is on the horizon, supporters are returning – tickets for today's match were sold in less than two hours – and the team, which came 88th in the League last year, is flourishing.

Much of this is down to a youth system which is bearing fruit, illus-



John Hollins, happy in his new domain: 'I enjoy every minute of it. It is a pleasure to work here because of the way people have responded' David Ashdown

trated by the likes of the 17-year-old winger Stuart Roberts, who gave Julian Dicks a fearful chase in the two West Ham games, but the majority is down to the unlikely partnership of Hollins and Curtis.

The latter is an old Swansea hero: born in the Rhondda Valley, he played for the Swans at the age of 18 and Wales by the time he was 21. But how did Hollins get to The Vetch? He can only remember ever playing there twice.

The 52-year-old from Guildford spent his whole career, which was illustrious enough to earn him the MBE for "services to football", in the capital with Chelsea, Queen's Park Rangers and Arsenal. He then managed Chelsea and coached QPR before being sacked last year to make way for Vinnie Jones. A fax

from QPR, alerting clubs to Jones' availability following another up-heaval at Loftus Road, is on the wall. Not, one suspects, with a view to acting upon its information.

Symmetry suggested a call from Arsenal but it was two acquain-

this club. I can only deal with what I inherited, not what went before."

He inherited 28 players, many of them teenagers, and a possible 29th.

"As I came in on 2 July," Hollins said, "Martin Thomas was sitting there, about to sign from Fulham on

one Swansea supporter said, his voice deep with admiration, "It's not just that they're playing really good football, it's that he's done it with the same players as last year."

Swansea may still be only midway in the Third Division but they

lost to Norwich in extra-time in the Worthington Cup.

The young players are already attracting scouts but Hollins, while aware of the realities, is not keen to sell. "We are trying to build something here. I'm here to develop these players for this club and themselves. They might be lucky, have five

good games and be snapped up but they don't understand the game yet. My education was not complete until I went to Arsenal at 33 and found out what a football club was really about. If they want to stay I'll develop them; if not there's not much I can do about it."

Hollins continues to learn. He is noticeably more relaxed than when managing Chelsea – from 1985-88, a difficult period – and said of his outlook now: "I enjoy it. I enjoy every

minute of it. It is a pleasure to work here because of the way people have responded."

"I'm older than I was at Chelsea. I don't know if I'm wiser but I have learned a lot. As someone said, 'the first time you get sacked you realise what it is like. The second time, it doesn't bother you.' I've been sacked twice now."

Hollins, who is full of praise for the modern Chelsea, will have two reminders of his side at The Vetch today. In goal for Swansea is Roger Freestone, while at left-back for Derby is Tony Dorigo. Both were signed for Chelsea by Hollins. Football is a small world at times.

Dorigo was a good pro, I'm looking forward to seeing him," Hollins said. "Freestone was just a baby then, but he has developed into a good keeper." He will have to prove it today. Hollins added: "This could be the trickiest game, because Derby can play football in every area. The advantage we might have is that, unlike Plymouth (Derby's opponents in the third round), this is a tight ground. The crowd are close in and you get a great atmosphere."

When it is over, win or lose, Hollins will head for London. Linda, his wife of 30 years, has stayed in the capital and both their children work there.

After a Sunday at home Hollins returns to Wales at 8am every Monday. It is not ideal but it is inevitable, given the precarious nature of football management.

Home in Wales is a flat overlooking the beach and his sweltering office, which is decked with a Welsh flag, a newspaper cutting from Finland, a congratulatory fax from Cardiff (relations between the clubs are better than between their respective fans) and a clock stuck at quarter-to-nine.

At least it is right twice a day – more than some managers, a cynic might say. Of the many Hollins has experienced he cites Dave Sexton as his biggest influence. Sexton managed Chelsea, when Hollins played in their 1970 FA Cup win over Leeds, a night which, for him, was eclipsed by the victory over West Ham.

"I enjoyed it more, as this is something we have been building, than I was one person in a football team. I've always felt the FA Cup was special and this has really raised our profile. To have won over two games, and to have done so playing football, was very pleasing."

At which point Cyril the giant swan, one of the game's more reclusive mascots, bursts in, shoves his beak in the empty-beer glass and casts a threatening look in my direction. I am uncomfortably reminded of a resemblance to Rod Hull's Emu and decide to make an exit. Quite what the Bald Eagle, as the Derby manager, Jim Smith, is known, will make of this afternoon is anyone's guess, but feathers might fly.

Beagrie primed for great leap forward

Bradford's gifted winger will be head over heels today should he score against Gullit's Newcastle in the FA Cup. By Phil Shaw

THE PATHS of Peter Beagrie and Ruud Gullit finally converge on at St James' Park today, when Bradford City's famously acrobatic winger hopes to somersault into the last 16 of the FA Cup at the expense of Newcastle United. Not so long ago, but for Beagrie's honesty, they would have been on the same side.

In the spring of 1997, injuries left Chelsea short of left-sided players. Frank Clark, then Beagrie's manager at Manchester City, summoned him on transfer-deadline day to explain that Gullit wanted to take him on loan.

Dennis Wise had recommended him to the drenched one, having played alongside Beagrie for England B and against him in club football. The opportunity to return to the Premiership was irresistible. There was just one snag, however.

"I'd been out for a year and a half because of a fractured shin and chronic tendinitis," Beagrie recalled. "When you come back after so long out you often pick up secondary injuries, and I'd got this groin problem. Reluctantly I had to say: 'I can't.'

When he eventually left Maine Road, it was to join a Bradford side managed by his friend and fellow son of Middlesbrough, Chris Kamara. Before the end of the season, Kamara had gone and Beagrie was embroiled in Everton's relegation fight after a surprising loan deal that did go through.

Summer saw him back at Valley Parade, where Paul Jewell was restructuring the squad. After a faltering start, Bradford have opened a four-point lead in second place behind Sunderland, with the 33-year-old Beagrie displaying the form

which once prompted Everton to lavish £750,000 on him.

At his best, it is easy to see why he would have appealed to a fain-minded Dutchman like Gullit. In terms of technique, particularly the drag-back with the sole, and the body swerve and the flitting of crosses, Beagrie has few peers. But he has also been accused of over-elaboration, and of being a luxury player in the age of the wing-back.

"I've always thought that criticism was unfair. I'm not an arty-farty winger but a player who can get stuck in when necessary. Howard Kendall says he doesn't like wingers, so I had to win him over when he first came back to Everton. I must have done okay because he invited me back last year to provide a service for big Duncan Ferguson."

"You have to be able to battle as well as doing something on the ball, but I feel there's a lot of rubbish talked about 'battle'. There's a misapprehension that it means steaming into 50-50 challenges. It's also about being brave enough to do your stuff, take people on, when you're 2-0 down."

There has been no shortage of managers keen to exploit his ability to get behind a massed defence. Supporters, too, tend to warm to his style, and he looks back on a "fantastic rapport" with the Maine Road crowd. "You have to be a certain type of player to go down well there. It's a big pitch and you can't hide. You must accept responsibility."

Beagrie, remarkably, played for three months with his broken shin in a forlorn attempt to help Manchester City stay in the top flight. "At first I was told it was a matter of playing through the pain barrier. I was playing with injections which I realise now wasn't a good idea. But that's footballers – you'll do anything to play."

The lack of negativity in Gullit's philosophy was one of the attractions



Peter Beagrie: 'I get stuck in when necessary' Andrew Varley

when Beagrie briefly had the opportunity to join him. "People go on about 'sexy football', though all he meant was that players should enjoy playing and express themselves, with no fear factor. He's trying to impose that at Newcastle but I think he's realised he might have to change a few faces."

Bradford would be only too happy to hasten Gullit's make-over by exposing their hosts' shortcomings. Moreover, Beagrie is due some luck in cup football: he scored for Ever-

Graham defends 'genuine' penalty appeals by Ginola

GEORGE GRAHAM has said he supports Tottenham and David Ginola are victims of the "dover" reputation, which the charismatic Frenchman insists is unwarranted.

As the Spurs manager leads his team into their FA Cup confrontation with Wimbledon at Selhurst Park today, he makes no apology for furthering the debate which has lingered on since last week's goalless Premiership draw between the two sides.

Graham saw Ginola denied four penalty claims in that match and has admitted the referee Mike Riley could well have been right on three of those occasions after studying video footage of the match.

But Graham insists: "There was certainly one clear case for a penalty in the first half and I believe the appeals in the other three incidents were also genuinely made."

"When I give an opinion it is always based on fact – and the fact is that Tottenham have not been awarded one single penalty in the Premiership this season."

"If we had been given six or eight penalties then I could understand people saying that Ginola is diving around, but to me the proof of the pudding is that we've had none at all."

"I'm careful never to comment on other teams and what their players do and so I am disappointed about what's being said about Ginola."

Graham insists the onus is on defenders not to make contact with players like Ginola, who are expert at running at them with the ball.

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The Wimbledon manager, Joe Kinnear, who was one of Ginola's

chief critics last week, admits he is concerned about what might happen if a similar incident were to occur today. "We have to be very careful and not make silly, rash challenges," he said.

It is unlikely to be the only key issue in a confrontation between teams who meet again in the first leg of the Worthington Cup semi-finals at White Hart Lane on Wednesday.

On the notoriously heavy pitch at Selhurst Park – much different now from the grassy surface on which the Dons beat Spurs 3-1 on the opening day of the season – establishing control of midfield is likely to be a decisive factor.

Graham believes it is a great opportunity for Steffen Freund, his new German signing, who will be making only his third Tottenham appearance after moving from Borussia Dortmund.

"Freund has already shown his worth and I believe we've got him at a fantastic price at just £750,000. He will soon be rated here in the 24th class," Graham said.

"He's strong and very competitive and can also pass the ball well. He's just the sort of player we've needed."

Graham will also have Darren Anderton back, after the England man missed last week's game with a calf muscle injury. Les Ferdinand is also fit again, and may displace either Chris Armstrong or Steffen Iversen up front.

Conditions could dictate but Graham said: "We are not worried about the prospect of a heavy pitch. We've been working out all week on a quagmire at our training ground and it is not a problem."

Wimbledon's John Hartson, however, will miss today's game as well as the Worthington Cup tie on Wednesday. The 27.5m signing is cup-tied, having played for West Ham in both competitions.

THE INDEPENDENT Saturday 23 January 1999

30/FOOTBALL

Hollins' Swans no longer ugly ducks

A former Chelsea hero can maintain the revival at Vetch Field with today's FA Cup fourth-round visit of Derby. By Glenn Moore

WHEN THE eight-foot swan arrived in John Hollins' office, pursued by a Sun reporter chasing an exclusive interview – with Sidney the Swan not Hollins, it was time to leave. Now things were really getting crazy.

It was nutty enough when I had arrived an hour earlier. "Have a seat, take your coat off," Hollins said, "and your jacket, and you might want to take everything else off, too."

Had Swansea City's epic FA Cup victory over West Ham, which earned them today's fourth round tie with Derby County, gone to Hollins' head? Or was it the "glamour" calendars discreetly hidden around the corner, above the desk of his assistant, Alan Curtis? No, the problem was the heating.

Due to a long-standing thermostat problem the City manager had two choices. Shiver with the heating off, or sweat with it on. He is thus the only manager with an office sauna (at least until Big Ron hears about it) and that, not the golden beach at Mumbles, may be what he means when he recently compared Swansea to Marbella.

But it appeared to come at a price. As Hollins dug a beer out of the fridge – all in the line of duty, it was to prevent me becoming too parched to ask questions – I looked around his desk. There, alongside the usual managerial paraphernalia – a copy of *Rothmans*, a pile of paperwork – was a collection of stamps torn from their envelopes. The financial problems of lower divisions clubs are well known but this took the biscuit: were Swansea so hard up that they had to collect used stamps to pay the heating bill?

Not so, Hollins said, he was saving them for a member of staff who collected them for charity. Swansea may have fallen a long way since the heady years when John Toshack took them into the top flight 20 years ago but they are not that desperate. Indeed, the Third Division side are in better health than for some time.

After two years of boardroom wrangles and managerial change the club is on the rise. A new ground is on the horizon, supporters are returning – tickets for today's match were sold in less than two hours – and the team, which came 88th in the League last year, is flourishing.

Much of this is down to a youth system which is bearing fruit, illus-

As one supporter said, his voice deep with admiration, 'It's not just that they're playing really good football, it's that he's done it with the same players as last year'

John Hollins, happy in his new domain: 'I enjoy every minute of it. It is a pleasure to work here because of the way people have responded' David Ashdown

George Graham has said he supports Tottenham and David Ginola are victims of the "dover" reputation, which the charismatic Frenchman insists is unwarranted.

As the Spurs manager leads his team into their FA Cup confrontation with Wimbledon at Selhurst Park today, he makes no apology for furthering the debate which has lingered on since last week's goalless Premiership draw between the two sides.

Graham saw Ginola denied four penalty claims in that match and has admitted the referee Mike Riley could well have been right on three of those occasions after studying video footage of the match.

But Graham insists: "There was certainly one clear case for a penalty in the first half and I believe the appeals in the other three incidents were also genuinely made."

"When I give an opinion it is always based on fact – and the fact is that Tottenham have not been awarded one single penalty in the Premiership this season."

"If we had been given six or eight penalties then I could understand people saying that Ginola is diving around, but to me the proof of the pudding is that we've had none at all."

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Weekend guide to the FA Cup

THIRD-ROUND REPLAY

Notts County v Sheff Utd

W: 1894 Cap best W: 1899, 1902, 15, 25
Apps: 4 Wins: 1 3rd rd form (last 5 years) Apps: 5 Wins: 2

NOTTS COUNTY will be without the injured trio of Sean Farrell, Mark Robson and Duane Darby, while loan players Paul Bolland and Kim Grant are ineligible. Tony Garcia has a chance of recovering from a back problem and Craig Dudley has been recalled from a loan spell at Hull. County have lost four of their last five matches and a good cup run would be much appreciated by a side low on morale. Whether that will be possible against opposition from a higher level is debatable.

Sheffield United are without suspended midfielders Shaun Derry and Paul Devlin. Defender Roger Nilsen is doubtful with a calf injury and on-loan Middlesbrough striker Andy Campbell is ineligible. Bobby Ford returned for the reserves in mid-week after flu and is in contention to return, but referee Simon Tracy (flu) is still out. The Blades have lost three of their last five games. Winners will be at home to Cardiff in the fourth round.

FOURTH ROUND

Aston Villa v Fulham

W: 1887, 95, 97, 1905, 13, 20, 57 Cap best W: 1975
Apps: 4 Wins: 3 4th rd form (last 5 years) Apps: 0

ASTON VILLA'S striker Stan Collymore is on stand-by for a recall to the side. The England international, on the bench for six of Villa's last eight games, is poised to step into the side if Dion Dublin is ruled out with a groin strain. Paul Merson is also keen to step back into the starting line-up after his goalscoring return from an eight-match absence with a back injury as a substitute against Everton on Monday. The possible change in attack is likely to be the only switch that Villa will make as they attempt to keep alive their hopes of an FA Cup and Premiership double.

The Fulham defender Simon Morgan has recovered from a calf injury that kept him out for three weeks and is in contention for a place in the starting line-up. Ian Selley is back in full training after a long spell out with a broken leg but striker Paul Moody is expected to be on the sidelines for a further three weeks. The Cottagers have not progressed this far in the FA Cup since 1983, and although rank outsiders, will be buoyed by victory over Southampton in the third round.

Barnsley v Bournemouth

W: 1912 Cap best W: 1957
Apps: 3 Wins: 1 4th rd form (last 5 years) Apps: 0

BARNESLEY HAVE defender Scott Jones out through suspension and striker Don Goodman struggling to overcome a hamstring injury. Player-manager John Hendrie could include himself in the starting line-up.

The Bournemouth midfielder John Bailey, who broke a finger in last weekend's 2-0 win against Notts County, is likely to play wearing a protective cast. Former Chelsea striker Mark Stein, scorer of 21 goals this season, lines up alongside Steve Fletcher but former Manchester United midfielder Russell Beardmore is ruled out with a long-term back problem. Bournemouth's manager, Mel Machin, heads back to Barnsley fully believing his side can pull off another FA Cup shock. They disposed of West Brom in the third round and a trip to Oakwell holds no fears for Machin, who managed the Tykes from 1989 to 1993. Barnsley knocked the south coast club out of the Worthington Cup in October, but Machin said: "We know a little bit more about them now. Ashley Ward was outstanding against us when they beat us 2-1 earlier in the season but he's gone now."

Blackburn v Sunderland

W: 1884-85, 90-91, 1928 Cap best W: 1937, 73
Apps: 3 Wins: 1 4th rd form (last 5 years) Apps: 0

KEVIN GALLACHER failed a fitness yesterday, leaving Blackburn manager Brian Kidd with two recognised strikers. Chris Sutton remains a long-term absentee, Kevin Davies faces a tonsil operation, and new recruit Matt Jansen is cup-tied, so Ashley Ward and Nathan Blake look certain to continue up front. Captain Tim Sherwood starts a two-match suspension, and his place could go to Blackburn-born David Dunn, a young England player. The England keeper Tim Flowers is back after two months on the sidelines but he is unlikely to dislodge Australian John Flanagan.

Sunderland, riding high at the top of the First Division, will hand late fitness tests to Michael Bridges and Nicky Sunmarran. Bridges picked up a knock in the reserves' midweek win over Birmingham and Sunmarran made his comeback from an ankle injury in the same game. The two sides have met on four previous occasions in the Cup, with Rovers winning every time. The last Cup meeting was in 1980, when Rovers took Sunderland to a replay in the third round and then ran out 4-1 winners.

Bristol Rovers v Leyton Orient

6th rd: 1951, 58 Cap best Semi-final: 1978
Apps: 0 4th rd form (last 5 years) Apps: 0

BRISTOL ROVERS will be without their new signing Andy Thompson, who is cup-tied, and Mark McKeever, who is ineligible. Stephane Leon is ruled out by a one-match ban, opening the door for youngsters Mike Troughton and Mark Smith. Defender Dave Pritchard is also available after long-term injury and midfielder Michael Meaker returns after missing the Reading match through suspension.

Orient have a doubt about defender Stuart Hicks, who has a back problem, and rate his chances of being fit at 50%. Striker Tony Richards is suspended and fellow striker Carl Griffiths is on loan at Wrexham. The two sides have met three times in the Cup, with Rovers going through on two occasions and Orient once. The last time the teams met in the Cup was four years ago, when Rovers won 2-0 in the second round. Rovers' player manager Ian Holloway is confident of getting a result this afternoon. "We fancy our chances with the benefit of a home draw," he said. Orient's midfielder Matt Lockwood said: "We knocked them out of the Worthington Cup and it would be fantastic if we could make it a double."

Everton v Ipswich

W: 1906, 33, 66, 84, 95 Cap best W: 1978
Apps: 3 Wins: 1 4th rd form (last 5 years) Apps: 3 Wins: 3

DAVE WATSON has been added to Everton's list of injuries, suspensions and international calls as they prepare for this contest against one of the First Division's leading sides. Veteran defender Watson is struggling to recover from a back injury picked up in the 3-0 defeat at Aston Villa on Monday. Manager Walter Smith is already without injured defenders Richard Dunne, Steven Bilic and Craig Short. Midfielder Olivier Decoutre is out through his third suspension of the season while striker Ibrahim Bakayoko is on international duty with the Ivory Coast. John Collins is also on the long-term injured list, but David Unsworth is back after suspension and Everton are searching for a new-look striking partnership involving youngsters Michael Branch and Danny Cadamarteri.

Ipswich will be boosted by the return of Mick Stockwell, who has missed the last 13 games following an ankle operation, while Tony Mowbray and Bobby Petta return from one-match bans. Ipswich have met Everton four times previously in the Cup and have lost every time, the last occasion being 1985 when the Merseysiders won 1-0 in a sixth-round replay.

... And statistics

How minnows become mighty

A LARGE part of the FA Cup's fascination is the possibility of an upset – especially the bringing down to earth of a top flight club. Since the formation of the Premiership in 1992, such "giant killings" have happened 36 times in 193 attempts and there are nine more opportunities in this weekend's fourth-round ties.

The evidence does not suggest that giant-killing feats are getting any rarer, despite the growing financial gap between Premiership and Nationwide League and there have even been a couple of Nationwide "firsts" this year. Portsmouth were the first side to be drawn away to a Premiership club in the third round and win without a replay, while Swansea were the first ever club from the Third Division to claim a Premiership scalp in any round of the competition.

Giant killings in the Premiership era...

Season	Number of Premiership clubs knocked out by Nationwide sides.	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99 (so far)
1992-93	3	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99 (so far)
1993-94	12	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99 (so far)	
1994-95	5	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99 (so far)		
1995-96	5	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99 (so far)			
1996-97	5	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99 (so far)				
1997-98	3	1997-98	1998-99 (so far)					
1998-99 (so far)	3	1998-99 (so far)						

Twenty different Premiership clubs have come a cropper at the hands of Nationwide opposition since 1992. No Premiership club has yet succumbed to non-league opposition although Rushden & Diamonds' efforts against Leeds were the most recent in a line of worthy attempts. Twenty-two different clubs, whilst members of the Nationwide League, have been giant killers. Pride of place, by a long way, goes to Wolves and Bolton. Wolves are on the prowl for a killing again tomorrow when Arsenal visit Molineux. Arsenal fans won't want to be reminded of their three Premiership departures in the FA Cup to Nationwide opposition, but Wolves fans will enjoy recalling their five victories over Premiership opponents. Arsenal will be happier to remember their single goal semi-final victory at Villa Park over Wolves last April.

Villa Park over Wolves last April. Five current Premiership clubs have never suffered a giant-killing – Charlton have had hard time, while this season Middlesbrough have already gone out to Premiership opponents Tottenham, Manchester United also have Premiership opposition to contend with as they meet Liverpool, so only Derby are at risk of losing their status with a difficult trip to Third Division Swansea. Sunderland are the only would-be giant killers this weekend not to have tasted Premiership blood yet. Three seasons ago they were giants themselves (and were knocked out by Arsenal in a third-round replay at Roker Park) and now, as the out-and-out First Division leaders, they can hardly be called true underdogs as they visit Blackburn.

Derby will make a late decision on captain Igor Stimac before naming a side for the fixture at Vetch Field. An ankle injury has kept Stimac out for nearly three months but the Croatian defender has proved his fitness in the reserves and is close to a return. Danish defender Jacob Laursen has recovered from flu but Italian playmaker Stefano Eranio is doubtful with a hamstring problem.

Swansea v Derby County

Semi-final: 1926, 64 Cap best W: 1946
Apps: 1 Wins: 0 4th rd form (last 5 years) Apps: 2 Wins: 1

SWANSEA'S MANAGER, John Hollins, will delay naming his side until shortly before kick-off. He is hoping midfielder Richard Appleby will recover from an ankle injury but is likely to have to settle for a place on the bench. Martin Thomas is sidelined by a knee injury and Damien Lacey takes his place. Kristian O'Leary will replace suspended centre back Jason Smith. "I always believe that if you go in for a competition you must believe you can win it," said Hollins. "We joined in at the first round and are still here at the fourth. The more you win the closer you get and we have a belief we can get to the next round. We are in a dream at the moment because we are playing against a Premiership club and the experience is fantastic."

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Wimbledon v Tottenham

W: 1988 Cap best W: 1901, 21, 61-62, 67, 81-82, 91
Apps: 5 Wins: 5 4th rd form (last 5 years) Apps: 4 Wins: 2

JOE KINNEAR welcomes back Jason Euell from suspension and will throw him in straight into the team to face Tottenham. The Dons are without cup-tied record signing John Hartson and Nigerian forward Efan Ekoku, who is on international duty.

Darren Anderton and Les Ferdinand are likely to return to Tottenham in the second of four meetings in a month between the two sides. Anderton missed last Saturday's goalless Premiership draw with the Dons at White Hart Lane with a recurrence of a calf-muscle strain while Ferdinand was out with knee trouble but both have been back in full training. Teenaged centre-back Luke Young is also available again after recovering from flu but midfielders Allan Nielsen and Stephen Clemence are out through suspensions and John Scales is still on the injured list. Swiss international Ramon Vega, missing for nine games with a knee injury until he made a brief substitute appearance last Saturday, is another option at centre back for manager George Graham. But he is likely to stick with Scottish defender Colin Calderwood, who played last week despite a back injury which has eased.

Wrexham v Huddersfield

6th rd: 1974, 78 Cap best W: 1922
Apps: 2 Wins: 1 4th rd form (last 5 years) Apps: 2 Wins: 1

THE HUDDERSFIELD manager, Peter Jackson, insists his side will be able to succeed where League champions have failed in the past – by surviving an FA Cup trip to Wrexham. In 1992, the old First Division title-holders Arsenal were knocked out of the competition by Brian Flynn's men at the Racecourse Ground. They have since beaten Premier League clubs Ipswich and West Ham, and took Wimbledon to a replay last season. "We have been reminded all week of Wrexham's pedigree as giant killers," Jackson said. "I'm sure my players know what's expected of them." Barry Horne is out with ligament damage but Sean Hessey and Tom Cowan could return. Ben Thornley will not be considered despite recovering from a fractured bone in his foot.

For Wrexham, Gareth Owen may figure even though he dislocated his shoulder in midweek, while Karl Connolly and Phil Hardy should be fit to return and Ian Rush, the FA Cup's leading goalscorer, could also play.

TOMORROW'S GAMES

Man Utd v Liverpool (12 noon)

W: 1909, 48, 63, 77, 83, 90, 94, 96 Cap best W: 1965, 74, 86, 89, 92
Apps: 5 Wins: 4 4th rd form (last 5 years) Apps: 3 Wins: 2

GARY NEVILLE, out since the end of December through suspension and injury, is fit again and the Manchester United manager, Alex Ferguson, could draft him in at the expense of Wes Brown or full-back or Henning Berg at centre-back. United have not lost to Liverpool in the FA Cup in eight meetings since 1921 and are in such devastating form they could easily extend that record. But while they beat Leicester 6-2 last week Liverpool went one better with a 7-1 win over Southampton. With Liverpool's Robbie Fowler and United's Andy Cole in blistering form up front, it should be a game to savour at Old Trafford.

United have won three and drawn one of their last three League games. Tomorrow's opponents have rallied recently to win four from their last five and secure a draw in the other. Steve Staunton is a doubt for Liverpool because of a groin strain and Steve Harkness is on standy. Phil Babb and Karheinz Riedle are suspended but Dominic Mattei is set to play only his second game of the season and Steve McManaman has a chance of recovering from an Achilles problem.

Wolves v Arsenal (3.30 PM)

W: 1993, 49, 60 Cap best W: 1930, 36, 50, 71, 79, 93, 98
Apps: 4 Wins: 3 4th rd form (last 5 years) Apps: 3 Wins: 1

ARSENAL, WHO beat Wolves 1-0 in last season's semi-final, will be without first-choice goalkeeper David Seaman and suspended players Martin Keown and midfielder Patrick Vieira. Injuries rule out central defender Steve Bould, French utility player Gilles Grimandi and Portuguese striker Luis Boa Morte, who scored a vital equaliser in Arsenal's 4-2 win at Preston in the last round. But despite these setbacks, the Gunners, unbeaten in their last six matches and currently fourth in the Premiership, will still hope to get past Wolves – even if the tie is eventually settled at Highbury after a replay.

Wolves, one of the great sides of English cup football in years gone by, are 11th in the First Division. They last won the Cup in 1960 and these days are probably pinning their hopes on their highly-rated teenaged forward Robbie Keane. Just 18 and only in the first team for 10 months, Keane has been rated as "priceless" by caretaker-manager Colin Lee and scored both goals in the third-round win against Bolton. A host of Premiership clubs, including tomorrow's opponents, are said to be chasing him, but Wolves are unlikely to let him go easily.

MONDAY NIGHT'S GAME (8.0)

Oxford v Chelsea

4th rd: 1964, 82 Cap best W: 1970, 97
Apps: 2 Wins: 1 4th rd form (last 5 years) Apps: 4 Wins: 2

ALTHOUGH THESE teams have won one game apiece from their previous encounters in the FA Cup, there is not much in recent years to suggest that Oxford are likely to win this tie. Languishing close to the foot of the First Division, they have lost three and drawn two of their last five Nationwide League matches. Financial problems at the club – some estimates put the debts at £13m – have only made problems worse. A good cup run would be a good way to kick-start a revival of sorts, but on current form that appears unlikely.

Chelsea, unbeaten in 21 Premiership matches since the first day of the season and increasingly looking like title contenders, have more world-class internationals in their reserves than are likely to be gracing Oxford's first team in the next few years. The last FA Cup meeting between the two sides was a 2-1 Chelsea win in 1994. Oxford's glimmer of hope is the memory of having beaten a top flight Blues side 3-1 in 1991 when they were in the old Second Division.

Leicester v Coventry

Final: 1949, 61, 63, 69 Cap best W: 1987
Apps: 3 Wins: 2 4th rd form (last 5 years) Apps: 4 Wins: 2

LEICESTER'S TOP

scorer, Emile Heskey, has shaken off the flu and is likely to return. The 21-year-old striker missed last week's 6-2 home defeat against Manchester United but has returned to full training and is expected to play. Defenders Mark Elliott and Frank Sinclair return from suspension and winger Andy Impye has shaken off a calf strain. Leicester have appeared in four FA Cup finals but have yet to win the trophy. Their visitors have won the Cup once, beating Tottenham 3-2 in the 1987 final. The two sides have met once before in the competition, in 1982, when a third-round match was drawn 1-1 at Leicester before the Sky Blues won the replay at Highfield Road.

Noel Whelan rejoins Coventry's squad after a one-match ban.



SPORT



END OF A BASKETBALL DYNASTY P22 • SAMARANCH'S JUDGEMENT DAY P25

FA Cup fourth round: Bradford, Portsmouth, Ipswich and Sunderland lie in wait for vulnerable Premiership sides

Underdogs move in for the kill

THERE WE WERE, thinking the FA Cup had become an annual cult of the lowly by the high and mighty, when we were shaken out of our complacency by Swanssea City and Fulham.

The third round had a long, slow fuse on it and it was not until 10 days after the opening exchanges that West Ham and Southampton suffered the fate of the giant in the pantomime. The fourth round today, however, might be more up front with its shocks.

Swanssea and Fulham are still there, of course, and have plenty of scope for more embarrassment for their betters, Derby and Aston Villa, but even on a day belittled by the demands of television there are

BY GUY HODGSON

potential surprises littered all over the programme.

Leeds United will not relish a trip to Portsmouth, whose triumph over Nottingham Forest in the last round was downgraded from sensational only because of the parous state of the opposition, while Everton will hardly feel comfortable at Goodison against Ipswich, who have scored 19 goals on their travels in the First Division (10 more than the Merseysiders have managed at home).

Newcastle, too, are playing poorly enough to be concerned by resurgent Bradford City's visit, while Sunderland could easily defeat Blackburn Rovers at Ewood Park, although

whether that would be a surprise is debatable.

Leeds, the winners in 1972, will be fearful because, although their side might carry the trappings of the Premiership at Fratton Park, the personnel will be below what they would regard as their first team.

Alan Smith, Leeds' teenage

striker, and the midfielders Lee Bowyer and Alfie Haaland all have one-match suspensions while the captain, Lucas Radebe, is on international duty with South Africa. Meanwhile cash-strapped

Portsmouth have all to win and nothing to lose.

Ipswich's current record of three First Division defeats is hardly inspiring stuff ahead of their trip to Goodison, but that is to neglect several factors, not

least of which is Everton. Ipswich could easily have forced a draw against the runaway First Division leaders, Sunderland, and with 16 clean sheets recorded in 28 League games, there is every reason for confidence, particularly as their opponents have not won in the Premiership since 22 December.

Ipswich may regard the match as a test of their Premiership credentials, but Sunderland will travel to Blackburn knowing what is a special occasion today should be a weekly event this time next year.

That, in a nutshell, defines the attraction of the FA Cup and is the reason why even Aston Villa, the joint leaders in the Premiership, cannot afford to take the visit of Second Division Fulham lightly, particularly as the Londoners are commonly considered to be playing in at least one division too low.

The Weariders look certain for promotion after creating a seven-point gap over the chasing pack and Kevin Ball, the captain, relishes the prospect of renewing acquaintance with the Premiership they left in May 1997.

"Every game we play this season is a big game," Ball said. "We've been at the top of the League for the majority of the season and it's a fact that everybody wants to beat you."

"That's natural in football.

Whenever you play a side that's above you it gives you that little bit more determination to go out and beat them."

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"The team Fulham have at the moment could almost be a lower Premiership side and

they have showed their potential in the cups already this season," Gareth Southgate, who will be facing his former Crystal Palace team-mate, Chris Coleman, said.

"Chris is a very good player

and one of a number of players who have real pedigree and could be playing a much higher level of football. With so

many players of that standard in their team they are a real threat, but we are full of confidence at the moment."

It will also be a meeting of old acquaintances at Hillsborough, where Stockport's links with Sheffield extend beyond manager Gary Megson's two stints as a player at Wednesday.

Roger Wyld, County's physio,

is also a former Wednesday player; Brendan Elwood, their

chairman, grew up in the city a Sheffield United fan; and their right back Sean Connolly was born and lives in Sheffield and can see Hillsborough from his bedroom window.

"I'll be walking to the ground with my bag over my shoulder unless the manager insists I travel from Edgeley Park," Connally said. "I couldn't park any closer to the ground than outside my house."

"They have had some good results recently but we know they're beatable. At the moment they have only one outstanding player in Benito Carbone."

There will be several outstanding players at Old Trafford tomorrow but the attention is bound to focus on the strikers. Between them: Liverpool's Michael Owen and Robbie

Fowler, and Dwight Yorke and Andy Cole of Manchester United, who have scored 61 goals this season.

Deciding which duo will be victorious tomorrow could come down to a lucky bounce but history certainly points in United's direction. The clubs have met 11 times in the FA Cup and only once have Liverpool emerged on top and even then, in 1921, it required a replay.

Second matches might be necessary, too, for Arsenal and Chelsea, who travel to Wolves and Oxford tomorrow and on Monday respectively.

One quibble though: could it be that stretching the Cup over three days has something to do with what appears to be the public's declining interest in the competition?

Boro monitor Villa's talks with Juninho

BY MARK PIERSON

MIDDLESBROUGH HAVE confirmed that they are maintaining a watching brief amid fresh speculation that Juninho is set to return to England.

Aston Villa are in talks with Atletico Madrid for the Brazilian midfielder, who is currently out of favour at his club, but Boro had a first-option clause included in Juninho's contract when he left Teesside in the summer of 1997. They admitted yesterday that they have been in touch with the Madrid club to ensure that their interests are protected.

Dion Dublin, one of Villa's strikers who would relish the service Juninho could provide, is to see a specialist to determine whether he will need surgery following growing concern over the extent of his groin problem.

Dublin has been handicapped with the injury for the past month - he was rested for the third-round tie against Hull - and is definitely out of today's FA Cup fourth-round tie with Fulham.

Gregory said: "Something

will need to be done because we have rested him and looked after him for the last three weeks, but he is still having problems.

"He knows it has been restricting him in games. He has not been quite the same player as when he first came to the club from Coventry.

"He has tried to play through the injury, but it caught up with him last week against Everton. He overstretched for a ball and felt considerable pain.

"He will see a specialist over the weekend to find out how serious the injury is - whether or not he needs rest or whether he needs a bit of surgery. He might well need something like that."

John Gregory, the Villa manager, said he had been involved in the initial talks which might have "advanced the situation a little further".

He added: "I had a busy day yesterday and can confirm that I met some people. But there is nothing else I can add at the moment."

"I am trying to sidestep the issue while we prepare for our FA Cup tie with Fulham."

Middlesbrough denied they had made any legal move to block a potential transfer to Villa, but said they had simply exercised their rights under the legally-binding contract.

Juninho was at Boro for just 18 months after his £4.75m move from Sao Paulo in November

from

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TOMORROW IN
THE INDEPENDENT
ON SUNDAY



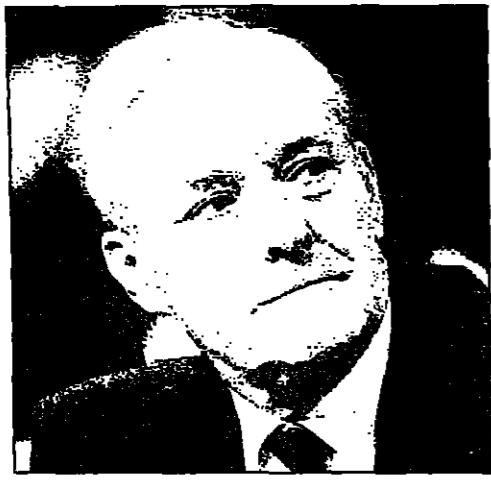
Inside the mind of
Jimmy White, snooker's
tortured star



The man who changed
fashion. An interview
with Yohji Yamamoto



When love turns to hate,
what do you do?



Tony Benn on the Lords,
Kosovo and the
English civil war



Tough Guys No 6: The runners in this month's Tough Guys race in Staffordshire are tested to the limits of their endurance

Kalpesh Lathigra

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk (e-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address). Letters may be edited for length and clarity

Iraq's medicine

Sir: As Noam Chomsky, Edward Herman, Edward Said and Howard Zinn point out (letter, 21 January), the US government is currently engaged in legal action against four members of our sister organisation, Voices in the Wilderness US. Each of the four is facing fines of \$10,000 or more, and the organisation has been told that it will be fined \$120,000. Their crime is to have hand-delivered "medicines and toys" to children's wards in Iraqi hospitals over the past three years without official authorisation.

I travelled to Iraq on a joint US/Voice delegation last February to take medicines to children's wards in Baghdad. Our medicines were seized at Heathrow by British Customs, and we were arrested on our return and threatened with prosecution (with a maximum sentence of five years' imprisonment). Despite this, Voices in the Wilderness UK continues to organise sanctions-breaking delegations. We may be voices in the wilderness, but we will not be silenced by government threats.

MILAN RAI
Voices in the Wilderness UK
London N2

Sir: After reading their letter I felt that the gentlemen at the University of Texas have failed to see the real reason behind the suffering in Iraq. It is highly questionable to say... "Maybe more than 1 million Iraqis have died as... a direct result of US/UK policy."

Perhaps the first area to lay the blame is the domestic policy of the Iraqi government. Saddam Hussein has proven himself to be an extremely cruel dictator who views his military capability as being far more important than the standard of living experienced by his own people.

Over recent years the majority of nations around the

world have begun to reduce their weapons of mass destruction in an attempt to increase stability and improve relations.

Iraq has defied this norm and continued to risk the stability of the Middle East with its secretive development of chemical and biological weapons. As with all investments, there is a cost to be borne and it is the Iraqi people who are left with declining standards of living as Iraq attempts to outgun the rest of the world.

You have to ask why these people require the medical aid and why they need food supplies. All the reasons point towards the investment decisions of Saddam Hussein and his continued defiance of the UN, which in turn lead to the suffering and shortages experienced by his people.

JAMES WILSON
London SE17

Best for children

Sir: The case of the Bramley family illustrates very well the rather haphazard nature of the services for children, partitioned as they are between social services, education and the NHS.

The last Labour government set up a Children's Committee which Mrs Thatcher abolished soon after attaining power. The Government should revive it. One reform that has long been needed is the appointment of an examining magistrate to replace the present case conferences in deciding what to do in case of suspected abuse. Another is a review of local authority care in relation to adoption and fostering, bearing in mind that delay and uncertainty are probably as damaging as inappropriate placement. The social services appear to have forgotten that the best is the enemy of the good enough.

JOHN A DAVIS
Great Shelford,
Cambridgeshire

things I played myself. I remember I enjoyed that first half. The second half... it just wasn't the same, was it?"

Keith's relative unfamiliarity with Dylan's catalogue is confirmed when, under Andy Kershaw's interrogation, he can't immediately bring to mind a set-list that is indelibly imprinted on the minds of virtually everyone else present in the hall.

"Why did you do it, Keith?" asks Kershaw. "I was very disappointed about what I was hearing," explains Butler. "But I think what really sent me over the top was when he did those lovely songs - I think it was er, there were two of them..."

"She Belongs To Me?" suggests Kershaw, as the CD is located and the tracklist consulted.

"No... 'Baby Let Me Follow You Down'..."

"Oh, I see," notes Kershaw, before hopefully prompting for poetic irony. "And I Don't Believe You?"

"No, 'Baby Let Me Follow You Down', and the other one was 'One Too Many Mornings'. I was emotional, and I think my anger just welled up inside of me. I think it was 'One Too Many Mornings' that really sent me over the top."

Keith remembers more clearly the intense humiliation he felt after Dylan shouted back at him. "I was just very embarrassed," he says. So was his friend Chris Cuttance. "He was not impressed at all. Who likes being shown up, right?" Then he said something like, "Come on, let's get out of here, and out we went."

It's the television interview that remains clearest in Keith's mind. "Remember, at that age, living in England, you hadn't come into contact with a North American ac-

Sex ratios

Sir: The current fuss about prescribing Viagra on the NHS ("Viagra rules ration sex to once a week on NHS", 22 January) is simply diverting attention away from the real problem in health care, the issue of rationing.

Rationing itself will always be inherent in any system where demand exceeds supply.

The nub, however, is that the government of the day, elected by the society it serves, and which determines the national spend on health care for that society, should accept responsibility for rationing on behalf of that society, and not simply dump it into the lap of individual GPs, under some politically convenient pretext.

In my surgery I remain the advocate of my patient, and will continue to strive for the best possible health care for that individual. Until the Government, mandated by our society, openly states the level of healthcare acceptable to that society, and its implications, rationing has no place in the consulting room.

DR ADRIAN CANALE-PAROLA
Rugby, Warwickshire

Sir: I was amused to read that "doctors are angered" by the limitations on the prescription of Viagra. As medical committees are almost invariably composed of older men, I can't help thinking that they may be speaking for themselves. Perhaps we could seek more impartial opinions?

Mr Dobson, on the other hand, is performing impressively. Dr JANET HUBER
Cambridge

Sir: When the expatriate staff of Children in Crisis were forced to leave Kabul last July we did not dismiss all staff. We established a temporary office in neighbouring Pakistan and have continued to employ the vast majority of our Afghan staff.

Through them, we have continued with the support of the British government and private sponsors, to deliver assistance to hundreds of children in Kabul, large numbers of aid agencies felt

forced to withdraw their staff from the capital last summer; but it was with great regret and grave concern for the future of the city's people.

Agencies faced very real security concerns at the time. In addition, some organisations found themselves restricted by a series of conditions determined by the Taliban - many of them directly contravening human rights conventions - which made it virtually impossible for them to provide healthcare for women and children or to employ women for this purpose.

The decision to leave was not based upon "Western assumptions about sexual equality".

Where they can be effective, aid programmes have not been suspended, and many of them are operated by Afghan staff.

Agencies are struggling

with one of the most difficult

operating environments in the world to meet the needs of a highly impoverished population.

ELIZABETH WINTER
*Chair, British Agencies
Afghanistan Group
On behalf of Afghanistan,
CARE International UK,
Child Advocacy
International Children in
Crisis, Christian Aid,
Emergency Relief Unit,
MERLIN, SAFE, Oxfam
Venture, Oxfam, Save the
Children and Tearfund
London SW1*

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We expect to be

reopening our office in

Kabul in early February.

DAVID SOGAN
*Children in Crisis
London SW12*

Regarding our assistance to the India Ghandi Hospital, the rehabilitation work has in fact been continuing over the past six months, organised by our Afghan engineer. The hospital administration may be disappointed that we are unable to do more, but this is a result of the refusal of many of the major international funding agencies to commit funds to the hospital, despite repeated requests.

We expect to be reopening our office in Kabul in early February. DAVID SOGAN
*Children in Crisis
London SW12*

Snow on the line

Sir: Last week I took the evening express from Le Havre to Paris. It left on time and there were seats in clean, well-appointed carriages for everyone.

Soon out of Le Havre, the snowstorm started, the fall getting progressively heavier. Some 30km from Paris the train came to a halt and was held up by points failure for about 35 minutes. Every five minutes or so apologies and explanations of the cause and likely duration of the delay were broadcast. Attendants came around with mobile phones for passengers to contact waiting friends or relatives. Forward arrangements were made for people with connections, who were also met and assisted on arrival. Passengers were handed compensation claim forms and stamped addressed envelopes upon disembarkation.

Congratulations to the SNCF: commendations to the suffering British public. ROGER HILL
Winchester

Sir: People seem to be fed up with spin doctors. This may be because they are misnamed. The "doctor" part is not justified if it implies any improvement in political health. As for "spin", it means to draw out and twist. Maybe therefore we should refer to them as Twisters.

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Sir: Does Maureen Lipman really think Peter Mandelson had a reason to be here? He bought a house worth £47,000 ("Why am I not taken seriously?", 16 January)?

If Maureen Lipman wants to be taken more seriously she should start by forming some serious opinions.

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Samaranch must resign to preserve the Olympic ideal

ONCE UPON a time there was an ageing dictator who had ruled his corrupt and secretive domain for 15 years. He was 75, which was the compulsory age of retirement for members of the ruling body. Fortunately, the ruling body raised the limit to 80. Then it passed a resolution two years later begging the President to stand for another four-year term.

However, this was no South American banana republic way back when. This was the International Olympic Committee last year. So much for the so-called "Olympic ideal". Juan Antonio Samaranch was re-elected and could carry on as President until 2001, when he will be 81. "The decision was not difficult," he said. "It is not a sacrifice being at the head of the Olympic movement."

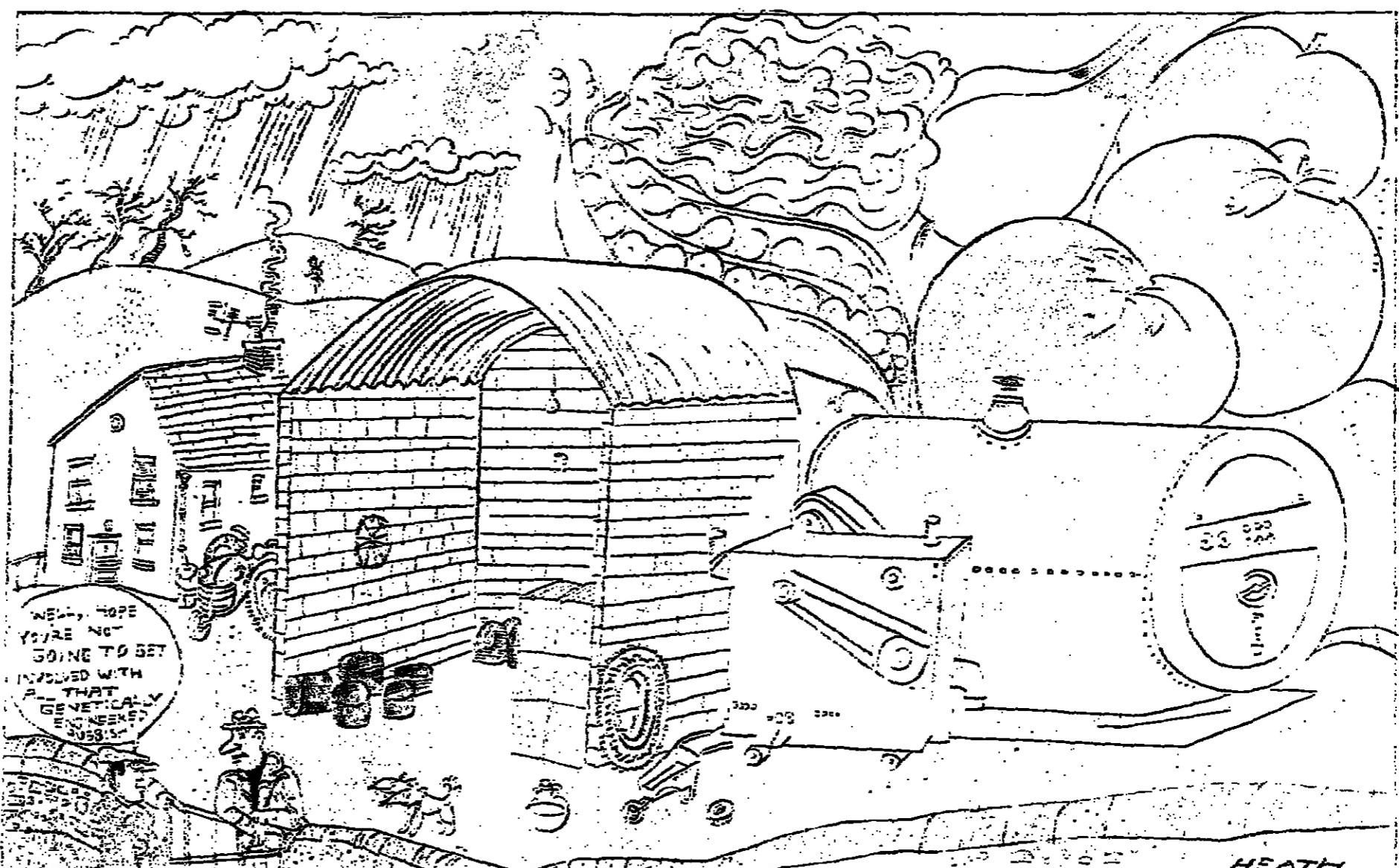
Far from it, it would seem, from the latest revelations of Olympic bribery. Mr Samaranch is not yet ready to fall on the samurai sword given him by the city of Nagano, which staged the 1998 Winter Olympics. But at last there are signs that some of the dissident members of the IOC are ready to give him a push. They deserve the strongest possible support in their showdown with Mr Samaranch, which begins with the publication tomorrow of a report into the corruption of Salt Lake City's bid for the 2002 Winter Games.

It has been obvious for some time that Mr Samaranch's resignation is the precondition of saving the reputation of the Olympic movement. Not because he accepted the samurai sword and, from Salt Lake City, a shotgun and rifle – arguing that, as a non-voting member of the IOC, he was exempt from the £100 limit on gifts. And not simply because of the wider bribery and corruption that was well known but, until now, difficult to prove. He should have resigned last year for undermining the drive against doping in sport by appearing to suggest that small amounts of drugs which did no harm should be allowed.

But merely sending the old dictator into retirement is not enough. The IOC needs thoroughgoing reform. No one would be so naive as to imagine that huge sporting events can be awarded to rich and rivalrous cities around the world without unseemly horse-trading, politicking and arm-twisting. After the 1976 Games bankrupted Montreal, and the 1980 Games were boycotted in Moscow, Los Angeles made a \$200m profit from the 1984 Games, and the Olympics now means big money. It is the same with the World Cup and, in America, the Super Bowl.

What matters, though, is that the IOC operates openly and democratically under agreed rules. Richard Pound, the Canadian IOC vice-president who has exposed the Salt Lake City bribes, has made sensible proposals for new rules to govern lobbying and he has talked of rooting out the bad apples on the IOC as a first step, while being respectful of the President's tenure. Well, Mr Pound should drop the politeness: the first apple out should be Mr Samaranch. Mr Pound should take over, and the whole IOC should be reconstituted. It should cease to be a self-selecting oligarchy, and its members should be elected by and accountable to the sporting bodies in the country they represent.

The torch of true amateurism may have been extinguished, but the flame of probity can still be kept alight



The brave new world of the health service

PERHAPS THE 1990s will go down in history as the Happy Decade: this week, the makers of Prozac celebrated the 10th anniversary of the launch of the new, improved anti-depressant. It might also be remembered as the decade in which the rationing of healthcare started in Britain. The Pharmacological Revolution brought us Prozac and the other new wonder-drugs like Viagra – for which Frank Dobson announced the rations this week – and promises chemical treatments for Alzheimer's disease, obesity and ageing in the near future. But it also makes the choices facing the National Health Service starker than ever before. So long as the frontiers of medicine were being pushed forward primarily by surgeons, it was easier to conceal the process of rationing in the system of waiting lists. Economists call it "rationing by queuing": it has the presentational advantage that it does not look like rationing, because everyone in the queue will get their turn if they wait long enough. In that sense, the NHS has rationed healthcare since it was founded in 1948.

But it is only with the advent of the new drugs that rationing becomes explicit. Viagra may be "only" £2 a

pill, but the cost of supplying it to everyone who thinks they may need it would bankrupt the NHS within months. And some of the medicines which offer the prospect of relief for common debilitating conditions such as arthritis and Alzheimer's will be considerably more expensive than this.

Who, then, is to decide who gets them and who does not? For the doctors' trade union, the BMA, as selfish and irresponsible a vested interest as the worst of the flying pickets in the 1970s, the answer is simple: doctors. For the BMA, the question of who should pick up the tab is equally simple: their members' employer, the taxpayer.

This cannot be right, and Mr Dobson is to be praised for being the first politician courageous enough to say so. No doctor likes having his or her judgement of a patient's "clinical need" pre-empted by a Secretary of State for Health, but every doctor must realise that there are practical constraints which prevent them doing everything they would ideally do for everyone.

Nor does Mr Dobson pretend that the ordering of priorities in the health service is anything other than a difficult, messy and morally compromised business. But his is the right way to proceed: to lay down guidelines as to who should have Viagra which allow doctors discretion in applying them. For the BMA to instruct its members to defy the Government by prescribing as much Viagra as they think is justified by "clinical need"

until the guidelines take effect is the kind of gesture politics which got Arthur Scargill where he is today.

The BMA accuses Mr Dobson of taking advantage of popular prejudice about impotence as some kind of joke to ration Viagra. It would be in a much stronger position if its members did not routinely prescribe unnecessary antibiotics, sundry other placebos and high-cost branded drugs for trivial conditions. But just because impotence can be a serious medical condition does not mean a new treatment must be immediately and fully funded on demand.

Of course, the medical profession has an important argument. It would be quite wrong to lump Prozac, Viagra and anti-obesity pills under the heading "lifestyle drugs", as if these were simply the equivalent of "soma", the happy drug of *Brave New World*. Depression can be a real, disabling condition with physical causes; likewise impotence and obesity.

But the BMA would do us all a service if it engaged in serious and persuasive argument, either that NHS spending as a whole is too low, or that spending in some areas of the NHS was less important to the health of the nation than spending on Viagra.

Healthcare is already being rationed: let the doctors join a grown-up process of managing the compromises and trade-offs required, instead of engaging in acts of petty defiance of guidelines with which they do not agree.

The gentle man who taught me the real meaning of life



FERGAL KEANE
Jerome had real presence; when he approached you stopped fidgeting and listened to what he said

in freezing convent halls. Ireland was opening up then and Jerome encouraged us to speak about the issues that mattered to us as teenagers.

I am sure that we horrified a few reverend mothers with our outspoken rants on the ills of Irish society. But Jerome backed us all the way. Midway through our third year, he introduced philosophy classes. These were to run in conjunction with the obligatory religious instruction. But in an overwhelmingly Catholic country the idea of introducing philosophy lessons, of opening our minds to Russell and Wittgenstein was revolutionary.

"Think boys, think. Use your minds," he would say.

The school was famous in Ireland. "Pres College" was traditionally a school for the sons of the city's merchant princes. In the days of the British empire, it produced civil servants for the colonies. It encouraged the games of cricket and rugby, es-

specially rugby. In many senses "Pres" was a conscious imitation of the English public school.

By the time Jerome arrived as headmaster, the school had lost much of its academic lustre. The joke was that it had become a little like a basin of clotted cream – filled with the rich and thick. Jerome came to "Pres" by way of the West Indies, where he had been working as a missionary. In those newly independent territories, he had thrown himself with gusto into the task of educating a new generation of leaders. Many of the ministers and judges of post-colonial Trinidad would count Jerome as their educational inspiration.

Perhaps it was because he came from a very poor area of the country himself, perhaps it was the experience of poverty in the West Indies. Whatever the exact reason Jerome arrived at "Pres" – that bastion of the privileged – with a burning mission for social change. He encouraged a scholarship system which broadened the base of the school-going population. Boys whose families could not keep up with the fees were quickly taken care of. We began to hear of concepts such as social justice, economic fairness.

But his greatest achievement was to set up a house-building programme for the city's elderly poor. In those days Cork suffered a big housing backlog. The tenements were filled with old people living in atrocious poverty. It was a world of dirt and smells and damp. The government paid lip service to the problem but little about it. The city's rich simply looked the other way. Jerome Kelly changed that.

He set up a group called Share,

made up of schoolboys who every week went out to visit the tenements. Then Jerome got us out on the streets with collection boxes. Every Christmas week we would fast and collect. Over the years, the boys of "Pres" collected millions. Jerome then went to the local authorities and cajoled and persuaded them into putting up money for new houses. Today the city has numerous modern developments that sprang out of Jerome's energy and idealism.

I last saw him in August when he came to lunch at my cottage on a beautiful summer's day. He told me he was fighting leukaemia but was confident of surviving. Most of his talk was about Share and how the housing projects were going from strength to strength. We had become firm friends after I left school, and he would often ring for a chat, wherever I was in the world.

He was a man who made you believe in yourself, even when the evidence suggested you shouldn't. The big idea at the heart of his life was that education was truly more than exam results: it was about the open eye, the open mind, the open heart. He got the academic results of course, but he made sure we saw the bigger picture.

I travelled from London last Monday when I heard he was seriously ill. I arrived at the hospital 30 minutes after he died. I had been late for him all my life. At school I endlessly struggled in late to be met by his admonishing gaze and the words: "Make the effort boy, make the effort." I imagined I heard them again this week in a hospital corridor.

Fergal Keane is a BBC special correspondent

Kosovo children appeal to Independent readers

Kosovo children refugees in Albania face cold, hunger and disease as winter deepens. Many are in deep shock, having witnessed their parents and relatives killed in the awful atrocities from which they fled. Albania, the poorest country in Europe, has few resources to support the massive influx of refugees.

Your action will help children who have lost everything

The European Children's Trust needs your swift response to set up an emergency centre in Shkoder, northern Albania, to help 2500 refugees. Our centre will provide basic necessities and schooling to give security to the confused and frightened refugee children living in Shkoder.

These are children and families whose homes have been lost, perhaps forever.

Special help is needed for the traumatised children who have witnessed terrible crimes, and must now start to live a normal life.

£30 could buy emergency medicine and food supplements for 5 Kosovar refugee children for a week.

Please send what you can to save the displaced Kosovar children this winter. Call 0800 056 3686 now or cut the coupon below.

I enclose £10.00 my choice £_____ to save Kosovar children. (Cheques to The European Children's Trust please). Or debit my Access/Visa/CAF card:

Card no. _____ Expiry date _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms _____

Address _____ Postcode _____

Telephone no. _____

Please return to: Tracy Barron, (W/A), The European Children's Trust, FREEPOST KEE339, 94d Queen Street, London, EC4B 4AR.

Or call 0800 056 3686 NOW.



Please act NOW – your gift will give hope

MONITOR

ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD

Paddy Ashdown's resignation • Crisis in Kosovo • The Bramley case • The Jagger divorce • State of the Union

CRISIS IN KOSOVO

Opinions about whether – and how – Nato should use force against the Serbs following the massacre in Racak

SYDNEY MORNING HERALD
Australia

THE WASHINGTON POST
US

NOW THERE are at least 45 more bodies to be buried in a Balkan graveyard – victims of what appears to be a massacre of ethnic Albanians by Serb security forces near the village of Racak outside the provincial capital of Pristina. If the brutality continues in Kosovo, international public opinion will eventually demand outside intervention, whatever the risks or unresolved consequences. The Racak massacre may not mark the decisive turning-point but it does bring it that much closer. Western diplomats would be well advised to ponder the "What then?" question – and come up with some answers quickly.

HONG KONG STANDARD
China

THE IMPORTANT question is: why the Western alliance is so loath to act against the continued killings virtually on the doorstep of some member states, while some of the more belligerent members of Nato are ever ready to blow Saddam Hussein to another world? While the West cannot make up its mind to act against mass murderers with the same alacrity it is willing to show elsewhere, massacres will continue. Innocents will die and war criminals will continue to sit in power.

FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG
Germany

SINCE LAST summer, when the Kosovo Liberation Army suffered a serious defeat, Kosovo has been reduced to a refugee problem. The Albanians have realized that they are on their own as long as the West regards Milosevic as the guarantor of stability. Unlike the Gulf, Kosovo is only a tiny piece of land, far from the thoroughfares of the global economy. No one is interested in its plight. Is keeping it quiet the most that is wanted, so as not to be pestered by further waves of refugees?

THE BRAMLEY CASE

Views on whether the children Jade and Hannah should be allowed to remain with their foster parents after the family's return from Ireland

DAILY MAIL

JADE AND Hannah Bramley are the victims of a sexual revolution that has stripped our most intimate relationships of all notions of commitment, responsibility and love; and of an ethical revolution that has all but banished the equally vital notions of guilt and shame. The number of these victims grows by the month. And generous adoptive parents, such as the Bramleys, are their best hope of rescue.

THE GUARDIAN

EVERYTHING TO do with the Bramley case is alarming. Cambridgeshire has raised some powerful objections. There are serious doubts about would-be adopters who insist on being called Mummy and Daddy from the first day of fostering. Refusing to let the children see previous foster-parents, cutting them off from their few slender roots, was deeply



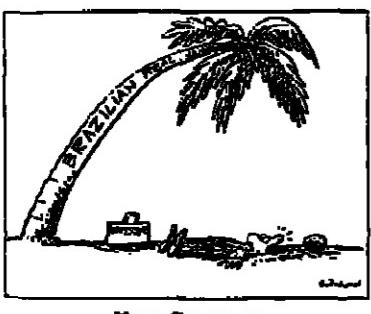
THE TIMES

wrong. Adopters playing make-believe perfect families is a recipe for later disaster. (Polly Toynbee)

THE EXPRESS

WHO CARES if the children missed nursery school? Who learns anything in today's schools anyway. It's mad that adoption should be so hard in a world where abortion, divorce, unwed motherhood and under-age sex attract so little disapproval from the authorities. (Peter Hitchens)

THE VIEWS OF THE WORLD

THE COURIER MAIL
AustraliaALGEMEEN DAGBLAD
NetherlandsTHE CITIZEN
CanadaPHILADELPHIA DAILY NEWS
US

Escape from a bed of nails

THE MIRROR

WHEN PADDY Ashdown became leader of the fledgling Liberal Democrats, not much was known about him. The most interesting fact was that he had learnt how to kill with his bare hands when he was in the Special Boat Squadron. Since then he has become one of the most effective politicians at Westminster. Mr Ashdown has forged a powerful alliance with Tony Blair while keeping his independence. That has allowed him to achieve many of his party's long-held ambitions. We have not heard the last of him.

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

IT COULD be that Paddy Ashdown will bequeath a bed of nails to his successor. Two points occur. First, will the British electorate any longer vote for a party led by someone sitting for a Scottish seat, now that Scotland has its own parliament? Two of the strongest candidates, Menzies Campbell and Charles Kennedy, are Scottish MPs. Second, if there is to be a new map of British politics, where will the Liberal Democrats be found? Doesn't their decision to side with New Labour against the Tories, rather than being equidistant between the two, disable them in the struggles ahead? In the world of the Third Way, what use for the third party?

DAILY MAIL

THE FINAL judgment on Paddy Ashdown's achievement with the party he more or less invented will come when it next fights a general election. His replacement could well be a much younger man – such as Charles Kennedy – who would rather fight both Labour and the Tories in the interests of advancing the Lib Dems as an independent force, in cahoots with no one. If such a change, back to the "tribal" politics that Mr Ashdown has spent the past few years condemning, does improve the Lib Dems' strength at Westminster, then Mr Ashdown really will have gone at the right time. However, if the Ashdown years turn out to be the high-water mark for his party, then some Lib Dems could have him on their consciences for years to come. (Simon Heffer)



PADDY ASHDOWN'S RESIGNATION

Verdicts on the announcement by the leader of the Liberal Democrats that he will be resigning from his post in June

FINANCIAL TIMES

MR ASHDOWN'S departure alters the contours of British politics. But a much bigger event – the promised referendum in two or three years' time on participation in the euro – will remake the landscape. New Labour and the Liberal Democrats will then stand on the same side of the most important vote

in the nation's post-war history. Was that the beginning of a smile I saw beneath Mr Blair's frown? (Philip Stephens)

THE TIMES

WHO WILL now inherit the spread? The most respected of Mr Ashdown's lieu-

tenants, and his closest ally in co-operating with Labour, is Menzies Campbell. But his age would give his leadership a sense of the caretaker. Among the younger MPs, Malcolm Bruce, Charles Kennedy, Simon Hughes and Nick Harvey stand out. But the first three not only lack Mr Campbell's weight; they also do not share his enthusiasm for co-operation. The leadership election to come may be civil, but it cannot avoid laying bare the tensions within Liberal Democracy. It is a tribute to Mr Ashdown that he will then be all the more seen to have managed those strains with skill, grace and fortitude.

THE BIRMINGHAM POST

FOR YEARS, the Liberal Party was nothing but a repository of protest votes. Its success at the last election was the result of people refusing to vote Conservative. Mr Ashdown's successor will have to decide whether to risk all by staying close to Labour and then hoping Britain opts for PR, or whether to draw back and forge a separate identity for the Liberal Democrats once again.

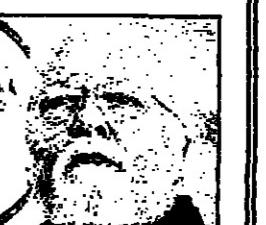
THE EXPRESS

IT REMAINS possible that Mr Blair, racked by the pain of guilt, will offer Mr Ashdown the consolation prize of a European Commissionership. I hope, for his sake, that he does not take this humiliating bribe. For 18 months he has endured jibes that he has turned himself into Blair's poodle. If he took that European job, it would be the final and definitive proof. (Peter Oborne)

THE GUARDIAN

THIS NEWSPAPER called long ago for a realignment of the left, demanding an end to the split which had let Conservatives govern Britain for most of the century. Tony Blair has made that project his own and Paddy Ashdown was his partner in it. The challenge for the Prime Minister now, having lost two of his crucial allies in less than a month, is to keep the faith – and deliver.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK



"It's a very insulting term, besides which I've never called anyone 'luvvie' in my entire life. 'Darling' is a different matter. I'm getting old and senile and can never remember anyone's name, so I have to call them 'darling'. Lord Aftonborough (above), so-called 'King of Luvvies'"

"It's amazing how many people in politics lack a sense of humour" Charlie Whelan, former aide to Chancellor Gordon Brown

"Ambition in politics is not a crime. It's part of the life blood of politics." Jack Straw, Home Secretary

"It is only in the union between two sexually different persons that the perfection of the individual can occur, in a synthesis of unity and of mutual psychic-physical completeness." His Holiness Pope John Paul II

"The House of Lords is all very well provided you don't inhale." Lady Castle, Labour peeress and former cabinet minister

STATE OF THE UNION

The US press considers the content of the President's State of the Union address

HOUSTON CHRONICLE

IT MUST be remembered that the mendacious Clinton, on the occasion of one of his previous State of the Union messages, declared emphatically that the "era of big government is over". Some of the biggest government programs and tax increases in US history followed that blithe baloney. While Clinton's presidency is in deep trouble, the state of the union has not been better in some time. In the coming weeks, the Senate will decide whether Clinton will remain president long enough to advance any part of his sweeping agenda.

USA TODAY

MANY of Clinton's ideas are useful and have popular appeal. But how to pay? The president may promise all he wants in new programs and "saving Social Security first". But the budget calculations just don't add up, and the smart calculus is that future retirees will pay the price.

MIAMI HERALD

ONCE AGAIN, Mr Clinton demonstrated that he is at least as blessed with personal gifts as he is cursed by a lack of moral discipline. America won't tolerate his removal. Mr Clinton walked into the House last night not unlike Daniel entering the lions' den. And like Daniel, he walked out again. The lions were cheering.

NEW YORK POST

THE PRESIDENT needs to solidify support in the solid center: What better way to do that than to give America a cash bath? This amounts to jury tampering in the court of public opinion, of course. But this

MISCELLANEOUS

Stories from around the world

HUNGARY REPORT

AN ELDERLY woman spent a month trapped in her pantry in Budapest, living on bottled fruit and tomato juice. The woman locked herself in on 22 December after inadvertently pulling the handle out of the door when she entered the pantry. She was released by the fire brigade on Wednesday, after a neighbour heard her cries for help.

TIMES OF INDIA

FOREIGN TOURISTS to India are often subjected to exploitation. There are reports of how unsuspecting budget travellers to Agra were exploited by touts, tourist guides, doctors and hotels acting in concert to fleece the victim's medical insurance money after first inducing them to fall "mildly ill".

CYPRUS MAIL

A LIMASSOL man suspected of trying to shoot his psychiatrist after he was told to wait in line has been held in police custody for questioning. The suspect was reportedly told he would have to take a

RESEARCH BY SALLY CHATTERTON

Balsam

THE S
WILLIAM SH
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SOC

REAGAN

Balsamic vinegar with your jam sandwich, sir?

NEVER MIND about genetically engineered vegetables - how about someone coming up with some nutritious packed lunches genetically engineered to appeal to a nine-year-old?

Ever since those Great Ormond Street Hospital doctors came out in support of Craig, the beastly child who refused to eat anything but jam sandwiches for three years (white bread, butter and jam), they said, contained everything he required in the way of nutrition, it has been impossible to make my children eat proper food, ie fruit, vegetables and brown bread.

Craig didn't eat broccoli, they whine. Craig never had to have oranges and brown bread. So when the primary-school child announced that he no longer wanted school dinners, and he asked why

couldn't he have packed lunch like everyone else, I reacted badly. Absolutely not, I said. A hot meal in the middle of the day, meat and two veg followed by, say, stewed apple and custard, was much better for him than a sandwich. "But Mum," said Craig Mark II, puzzled, "we don't have hot meals at school. We have cold pizza and greasy chips and for pudding we have soft ice-cream, and it's disgusting."

Not compared to what I used to have at school, it isn't. We at the Convent of St Francis de Sales survived almost exclusively on Spam fritters, beetroot and tapioca, except on Sundays when we had calves' foot jelly and Birds Instant Whip in three flavours - strawberry for the mums, chocolate for the prefects and vanilla for everyone else. I remember my friend Iris



SUE ARNOLD

When the primary school child said he no longer wanted school dinners, I reacted badly

Hilop saying wistfully that it was almost worth becoming a nun for the strawberry.

Whatever happened to good old-

fashioned school dinners? My daughters used to have mince and cabbage and mashed potatoes. Only children with weird dietary requirements were allowed to bring packed lunches. Now half the children in the primary school take in their own food, presumably because they don't like pizza and chips. No, surely that's impossible. Most modern children eat practically nothing else.

In the end, as usual, I relented. You can pack a surprising amount of nutrition into a wholesome sandwich, particularly if you forget to buy conventional fillings, as I invariably did. Once I made Craig Mark II a veritable power sandwich filled with the remains of last night's supper. When he came home next afternoon he was in tears. Everybody, he sniffed, had

laughed at his spinach sandwich. No one else had spinach sandwiches, in fact no one else had sandwiches. In their Nintendo lunch boxes they brought Thai chicken bites with lemon and coriander dip and sour-cream-flavoured Pringles crisps. No, surely that's impossible. Most modern children eat practically nothing else.

The trouble with modern children is that they're too sophisticated as far as food is concerned, because they eat out too much. I once heard a five-year-old in a restaurant ask the waiter to bring him some balsamic vinegar for his salad. Little brat.

In the good old days, school dinners were for children and

restaurants were for grown-ups. Talking of grown-up restaurants (the great packed lunch debate, albeit unresolved, is getting us nowhere fast) let me tell you this charming story about one of my favourites, the White Horse at Chigwell in Sussex, as famous for its cellar as for its dining-room.

Barry Phillips, its chef-proprietor, retired a couple of months ago and a friend in the wine trade went to dinner there on Mr Phillips's last night in the kitchen. Everyone, said Simon, was ordering amazing wines. The man at the table next to his had a bottle of 1958 Romanée Conti, which cost a cool £1,500.

"Come on, you must have something interesting in that cellar of yours that I could try," Simon said to the boss. "As a matter of fact I do happen to have a 1920 Chantec-

Brown, the last bottle, which could be OK. On the other hand it could be vinegar. It's up to you," said Phillips. "How much do you want for it?" asked Simon. "Shall we say £50?" "Done," said Simon and a dusty bottle was produced whose contents proved to be not at all bad. In fact pretty bloody good.

"I say," said the man at the next table, "that looks interesting. What is it?" He was told that it was a 1920 Chantec Brown. "Why don't we do a deal?" said the 1958 Romanée Conti man. "You have half of mine and I'll have half of yours, OK?" "Done," said Simon, who I suspect got the better deal, though I admit I know as much about fine wine as I do about - well the components of an acceptable packed lunch for a nine-year-old. Maybe jam sandwiches are nutritious.

THE SATURDAY PROFILE

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, POET AND PLAYRIGHT

A genius, but so ordinary

HIS 435TH year has been a good one. He is big in Hollywood - a new movie hyped for the Oscars - and in his own country he has just been voted "Person of the Millennium". His head is daily swiped through cash registers (look at the hologram on your Switch card); his works are raided by sub-editors in search of snappy headlines ("To Pep or not to Pep?"). And he's scribbling away with his quill in the top right-hand corner of the screen on which I'm writing, where he serves as my "Windows 97 Office Assistant". If his executors had sought to patent his image, like the trustees of the Diana Memorial Fund, his descendants would be able to buy out Bill Gates a thousand times over.

In fact, the blood line expired long ago. So what do we know of him? Not much, but more than we did a decade ago. Both his parents came from Warwickshire farming families. His father diversified from meat into leather manufacture. John Shakespeare was a typical English small businessman: careful of property and propriety, mildly litigious, a bastion of the town council. As an alderman he was entitled to send his children to the local grammar school free of charge. He could not have done his son Will a better favour.

The network of 16th-century grammar schools was essential to Queen Elizabeth I's unification of the nation. Education was the seedbed of Britain's prosperity, its burgeoning empire and its energetic cultural life. The King's School, Stratford-upon-Avon, with a bright young Oxford MA as master, imparted a rigorous grounding in the arts of eloquence and debate via the Latin language. Among the set texts were such literary classics as Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: Young Will was supposed to study their style, but seems to have taken equal pleasure in their raucous, sexy matter.

We don't know how far up the school Will proceeded before he left. And his whereabouts in his early twenties still constitutes one of the great mysteries of English literature. Academics tend to favour the theory, first circulated by John Aubrey in the later 17th century, that he was a country schoolmaster. A series of tenuous, circumstantial connections raise the possibility that he became tutor in a Catholic household in Lancashire. Lawyers prefer the theory that he was a lawyer's clerk. Men of action lean to the image of him as a soldier in the Flanders wars, a traveller in Italy, or a sailor (given that Stratford-upon-Avon is about as far from the sea as you can get in our little country, it is intriguing that Shakespeare writes so vividly of violent storms at sea, mouldy ship's biscuits and drowsy lookouts upon the high and giddy mast).

At the age of 18 he married Anne Hathaway, a woman eight years older than him and three months pregnant with his child. Thereafter, he must have been at home in Stratford periodically - his twins, Hamnet and Judith, were born a couple of years later. But the so-called "lost years" come

LIFE STORY

Born: Stratford-upon-Avon, 23(?) April 1564.

Educated: Local grammar school.

Vital statistics: Married Anne Hathaway, 1582; two daughters, Susanna and Judith; one son, Hamnet, died aged 11.

Died: 23 April 1616.

Works: 36 plays in collected edition (First Folio, 1623); involved in half a dozen more. Poems include 154 love sonnets.

Influences: Old plays and romances, chronicle histories, Latin classics.

anything he could lay his hands on.

His friends said: 'He was not of an age, but for all time' (Ben Jonson).

His admirers say: 'After God, Shakespeare created most' (Alexandre Dumas).

His detractors say: 'All his characters speak one and the same pretentious and unnatural language, in which no living man ever has spoken or could speak' (Tolstoy).

He says: 'I am not only witty in myself, but the cause that wit is in other men' (Falstaff).

antiheroes - Tamburlaine the Great, Dr Faustus, Barabbas the rich Jew of Malta - of unprecedented energy and ingenuity. Philip Henslowe, wheeler-dealing proprietor of the Rose Theatre, and Ed Alleyn, his charismatic leading actor, seemed to have all London at their feet. Then, as if from nowhere, a bit-part player with a provincial accent and nothing more than a grammar-school education started reworking old plays and stealing the thunder of the university men. The crowds flocked to his historical epic dramatising the battle between sturdy English Talbot and tricky French Joan of Arc; they adored the Tarantino-like black comedy of his blood-spattered tragedy of *Titus Andronicus*.

and I love my husband," beamed the contestant. "Sure," replied Groucho, "I love my cigar, but I take it out occasionally."

The exchange is quoted in several biographies, but the details vary suspiciously, so it may never have taken place. It is significant, though, that the joke should be ascribed to Groucho. If anyone were to toss a firecracker into the cloying conservative world of Fifties American TV, it could only be Groucho.

He tried to do something similar

in the movies, but the machine was too big and he was saddled with two, sometimes three, not terribly funny brothers so, apart from *Duck Soup*, "Gentlemen, we're fighting for this woman's honour. Which is more than she ever did" - the Marx Broth-

ers films failed to be half as sharp and funny as Groucho off-screen. The problem was that by the time the brothers made their first movie, they were already known as a highly successful vaudeville act. What audiences wanted and were largely given were film versions of the boys' well-established stage revues.

It is fascinating to speculate on what might have been had Groucho's language of nudges, winks and

wisecracks - since adopted by everyone from Morecambe and Wise to David Letterman - been given more room to breathe. As it was, he was stuck with Chico's relentless mugging and Harpo's ineffable harp solos from the stage act, and some ludicrous romantic plots that Hollywood required.

It is true there are some sublime moments - "Excuse me while I brush the crumbs out of my bed. I'm



An engraving of the playwright by Petjean, after the Chandos portrait

Mary Evans

a matter of speculation. His love sonnets are addressed to a fair aristocratic youth, probably the Earl of Southampton, and a lascivious "dark lady". Are they driven by homosexual desire? Promiscuous intent? Misogynistic fury? Or are they an elaborate game, a series of fantasies, like his plays? We just do not know.

One thing of which we can be sure is that the relationship between his sex life and his work was a great deal more oblique than is suggested by *Shakespeare in Love*. In this respect, the film remains squarely in the tradition of Romanticism, with its assumption that great art must be autobiographical. We find it very hard to accept the Renaissance idea that a sonnet, however passionate and heartfelt it sounds, may be primarily an exercise of the intellect, in the manner of a musical composition.

There were no more children, but the marriage survived. Perhaps in poor health, perhaps just bored, Will retired to Stratford-on-Avon in about 1612. He became his father - careful of his property, mildly litigious, a small-town worthy. What were his feelings for Anne? Some have detected an insult in the famous bequest to her of his second-best bed. But surely the right people for the largest bed were

his daughter Susanna and her husband, a local doctor. Second best would be good enough for a widow.

Soon after Shakespeare's death, his fellow actors assured his continuing life by printing all his plays in the handsome book now known as the First Folio. For the first time, the full range of his achievement could be absorbed: plays of every kind (comedies, tragedies, histories, satires, romances); characters of every rank; language of every style (a vast vocabulary, an amazing ability to crystallise thoughts into memorable sayings).

Shakespeare's greatest cunning is never to give too much away. He lets his characters speak for themselves, while keeping his own counsel. There is a whiff of crypto-Catholicism about some of the plays, but no firm evidence. So it is that he leaves space for us to project our opinions on to him. For radical theatre directors in the 1960s, the plays were joyously anarchic and contemptuous of authority; for Tory politicians in the 1980s, Shakespeare was spokesman for national pride and hierarchical social order. According to Jorge Luis Borges, literary sage of South America, the key to Shakespeare is that he is at one and the same time "Everything and Nothing".

So long as there are actors to play his parts, readers to be stimulated by his words and creative artists to be spurred by his example, Shakespeare will go on thriving. The new millennium will see thousands of remakings of him that we have no way of anticipating. But there is something especially winning about the Will of the Nineties. From the 1960s to the 1980s, there was a stultifying polarisation between "radical" and "traditional" Shakespeare. 1990s Shakespeare is more fluid, more laid back. We have let ourselves accept that he swings both ways - in politics, in style, in sexuality. The sexiest thing about *Shakespeare in Love* is Gwyneth Paltrow with her boy's kit on: the liberation of cross-dressing and the excitement of trying out different sexual identities are at once very 1990s and genuinely 1599s.

Tom Stoppard and his collaborators have done for Shakespeare what Shakespeare did for Cleopatra. They have transformed history into myth, and, in so doing, have demonstrated how "age cannot wither him, nor custom stale his infinite variety."

JONATHAN BATE

The author's "The Genius of Shakespeare" is published by Picador

ACCIDENTAL HEROES OF THE 20TH CENTURY

24: GROUCHO MARX, COMEDIAN

Typical Groucho, for whom subversion was an act of faith. In the Fifties, when he was host of the TV quiz show *You Bet Your Life*, a contestant proudly announced she was the mother of 10 children. As the applause faded, a clearly unimpressed Groucho asked if that weren't rather excessive. "Well, I love my children

and I love my husband," beamed the contestant. "Sure," replied Groucho, "I love my cigar, but I take it out occasionally."

The exchange is quoted in several biographies, but the details vary suspiciously, so it may never have taken place. It is significant, though, that the joke should be ascribed to Groucho. If anyone were to toss a firecracker into the cloying conservative world of Fifties American TV, it could only be Groucho.

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in the movies, but the machine was too big and he was saddled with two, sometimes three, not terribly funny brothers so, apart from *Duck Soup*, "Gentlemen, we're fighting for this woman's honour. Which is more than she ever did" - the Marx Brothers' films failed to be half as sharp and funny as Groucho off-screen. The problem was that by the time the brothers made their first movie, they were already known as a highly successful vaudeville act. What audiences wanted and were largely given were film versions of the boys' well-established stage revues.

It is fascinating to speculate on what might have been had Groucho's language of nudges, winks and

expecting company", or "You're the most beautiful woman I've ever seen. Which doesn't say much for you" - but when Groucho is off-screen these turn into some rather tedious half-hours.

Not that it was generosity that prompted Groucho to share the screen with his brothers. The ready supply of money and available women that Hollywood promised was probably a stronger motivating factor. It is no coincidence that Groucho usually played lecherous money-grabbers.

However great his desire for the gifts the entertainment industry could bestow on him, though, Groucho heroically refused to kow-tow. He never forgot his God-given duty to lace every spoonful of sugar with a drop of acid. "I've been around so long I remember Doris Day before she was a virgin," he said; and of the film *Samson and Delilah*, starring Hedy Lamarr and Victor Mature: "The first picture I've seen where the male lead has bigger tits than the female."

All those stand-up comedians and chat-show hosts who make a good living nowadays flinging cutting one-liners at public figures owe a debt of gratitude to Groucho, who blazed something of a trail. Sure, the cynical barbs came easily to such a noted curmudgeon, but he still took something of a risk by refusing to play the Hollywood game. Perhaps, as he said himself, he just didn't want to belong to any club that would accept him as a member.



THE WEEKLY MUSE

BY MARTIN NEWELL



On soil too claggy for the plough
The sunlight falls across the fields.
A scant ten days to Imbolc* now;
The early morning darkness yields.

Now watch out for the "mink-with-wings"
Which may invade in weeks or so:
They're not de luxe, absorbent things
But are a type of Asian crow.
It's nastier than the native sort,
Descends in gangs, attacking pets -
A Hitchcock film come true, in short,
Which feeds on anything it gets.

The bunting out and two quiet cheers
Salute the age of "People's Peers".
Joe Normal and Joanne, his spouse,
Gain entry to Their Lordships' House.
But here's the thorn that spoils the rose:
The "club rights". There'll be none of those!

The restaurants and tea-rooms too,
And all the other stuff they do
Will vanish, which seems sad to me.
The least you'd want is grub and tea
For sterling work done down the years
To join the ranks of Tory peers.
But how would you attend a place
Which couldn't give you parking space?
And what about that stupid gown?
No, best advice is turn it down.

The British are obsessed, it's said,
With getting fit. I scratch my head
While people tear from gym to bar
And back again by motor car.
They're permanently clad for sport
In track suits of the louder sort
Which hint their "target weight" at you
From every High Street burger queue.

The poor old ailing English pub
Is under siege and shares are down
As Supervenues, "Girle Haunts"
And other bars take over town.
Perhaps the breweries whingeing now
Should lower rents and have a think
About those countless villages
Where people cannot get a drink.
It's due in part to tinkering
And due in part to simple greed.
You can't make pubs by formula,
The character's the thing they need.
But cheaper beer upon the shelves
And cheery hosts - they'd run themselves.

Best ask The Weasel what he reckons;
I'm out of here - my local beckons.

*Old pagan spring festival

DAYS LIKE THESE

24 JANUARY 1694

JOHN EVELYN (pictured), writes in his diary of the Frost Fair held on the frozen Thames:

"The frost still continuing more and more severe, the Thames before London was planted with booths in formal streets, as in a City, or Continual faire, all sorts of Trades and shops furnished, and full of Commodities, even to a Printing presse, where the People and Ladys took a fancy to have their names Printed and the day and year set downe, when printed on the Thames. This humour took so universally, that twas estimated the Printer gained five pound a day, for printing one line only, at sixpence a Name..."



die... that a small luncheon party for the Baldwins was not put off till the afternoon of the King's death. Then, and not till then, did Mr Baldwin [the Prime Minister] himself telephone to Julie to say he feared the news had suddenly become very much worse.

My younger daughter managed to get through Downing Street and so had a very good view of the procession as it came down Whitehall from the station on its way to Westminster Hall... She told me that she had never seen anyone look so ill or as unhappy as the Prince of Wales looked that day. He was evidently going through the most fearful mental and physical anguish.

My son-in-law [Lord Iddesleigh] described the marvellous scene in Westminster Hall when all the Lords and Commons received the coffin. The three Royal Duchesses came separately and joined the Queen. They were all wearing continental mourning, swathed from head to toe in black."

JAN IRVINE

25 JANUARY 1936

MARIE BELLOC LOWNDES, novelist, records in her diary the death of George V.

"So little did even those who ought to have known expect that the King was going to

THE WEASEL

After the chiaroscuro smog of Monet's London, I am confronted with cabbages and bog brushes at the Photographers' Gallery

SORRY, YET another piece on Monet, I'm afraid. Last Tuesday, the Royal Academy gave back the privilege of viewing its phenomenal trawl in advance of the half-million art-lovers due to flock through its doors. I look forward to reading the considered opinion of Richard Ingrams, whom I saw scooting round the exhibition at approximately 5mph, his shirt-lap flapping furiously. Equally valuable will be the views of his colleague Ian Hislop, who turned up later to spend half an hour or so chortling with a crony.

Anyway, what bowled me over was the second room of the exhibition. After half a dozen works in the first room depicting the sunny daze of Giverny, which Monet contrives to look more like Provence than northern France, the visitor is suddenly plunged into the familiar gloom of London. Among the 17 works devoted to views of the Thames, one amazing canvas loaned from Moscow depicts the Houses of Parliament as a hazy apparition looming in the smog, with a scatter of seagulls wheeling before the Gothic skyscraper of Victoria Tower.

It is doubtful, however, if the army of Monet fans would particularly enjoy experiencing the artist's subject matter at first hand. He was besotted by the chiaroscuro effects of the smog which, prior to the Clean Air Act, took the lives of thousands each year. "Without fog, London would not be a beautiful city," Monet insisted. "It's the fog that gives it its marvellous depth." He was also out on a limb in his liking for Charing Cross Railway Bridge (the exhibition contains five studies). Ever

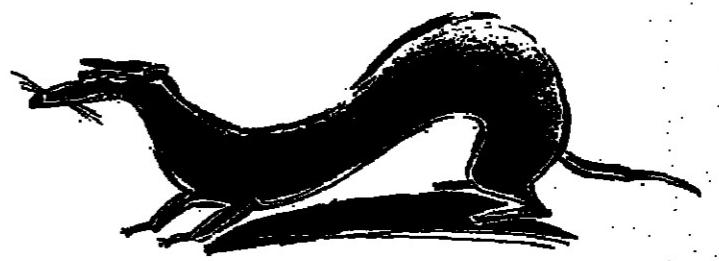
since it was completed in 1864, this workaday structure has been slated for spoiling the river view which inspired Wordsworth.

Monet produced his views of the bridge from the balcony of his bedroom in the Savoy. Room 614, to be precise. The hotel kindly allowed me a peep. Though the balcony on which he perched disappeared in 1910, when the Savoy's guests were provided with en suite bathrooms, the perspectives are exactly the same as in Monet's paintings. Admittedly, there have been dramatic changes to the left, with the rebuilding of Waterloo Bridge and a series of distinguished tower blocks replacing the belching chimneys captured by Monet. But the view to the right, with the railway bridge and, beyond it, the elegant arches of Westminster Bridge flanked by the spires of Westminster, has scarcely altered. And, of course, the muddy swirl of the Thames is exactly what Monet saw.

The artist undertook his London project over three extended stays. (Unique among his countrymen, he had a great fondness for English food, in particular Yorkshire pudding.) According to the exhibition catalogue, Monet stayed at the Savoy "from about September to the end of October 1899; 9 February to 5 April 1900 and 25 January to about 30 March 1901". But any latter-day impressionist thinking of repeating his endeavours should be warned. If we estimate his first visit as six weeks, his total stay amounted to 166 days. Since the luxurious Room 614

currently costs £355 per night, the cost of a similar stay today would amount to £65,570.

INTRIGUED TO discover how the fugitive tradition of Monet is faring today, I popped along to the Photographers' Gallery. This is currently occupied by three exhibitions by



Switzerland intersperses images of her family with out-of-focus shots of electricity pylons, cooling towers, Chernobyl and post-earthquake Kobe.

I was more taken by the "merciless neutrality" of the life-sized objects photographed by Christopher Müller from Düsseldorf. Not only are they in focus, they have also been given titles. A work called *From Head to Toe* consists of a hat, a standard lamp and a pair of wellies. The line-up in

Home and Dry includes a dining chair, a spade, a broom, a plant pot and our old pal the standard lamp.

A *Long, Dark Night* combines a cabbage, a toilet roll, a dead wasp and two bog brushes. A *Good 12 Inches* draws together a wastebin, a three-foot ruler and a plastic bucket. (Caption reveals that Herr Müller worked on this masterpiece from 1991-1997.) Still, in one respect at least, Herr Müller is on the right lines. After many years of sniffing round exhibitions of snaps, mainly taken by amateurs on the Yorkshire coast, I've come to the conclusion that an evocative title, preferably poetic in tone, is an essential component of any self-respecting photograph. For example, it seems compulsory that a moody study of an isolated post or monolith should be entitled *Sentinel*.

Similarly, any shot after, say, 4pm is automatically *Nocturne*, though *Evening* is equally acceptable in the case of a maritime scene. Still on this theme, a close-up of netting may be designated *Intertwines*; a fishing boat heading out to sea becomes *Odyssey*, while any portrait of a fisherman over the age of about 40 is traditionally dubbed *The Ancient Mariner*. A misty view is often *Crepuscule*, while a starfish is customarily *Etoile*. Any natural pattern, such as ripples on a beach, may be conveniently covered by *Moif*. For my money, the Photographers' Gallery should adopt this lyrical nomenclature forthwith. *Sentinel* is spot-on for Herr Müller's much-loved standard lamp.

I WAS sorry to hear of the departure of Paddy Ashdown, not least because I can boast a fleeting familial association with the great man. It happened a few years ago, when Mrs W and self were watching a Lib Dem party political before a significant by-election in Ryedale, North Yorkshire. Mr Ashdown was fielding questions from no-nonsense tykes who happened to be passing by. "Paddy, what d'yer think of this 'ere EMU (or some other issue of the day)?" asked a cloth-capped codger, and the leader produced a brisk analysis. All of a sudden, Mrs Weasel emitted a shriek: "That's my sister's house." True enough, the cottage was providing a picturesque backdrop to the Lib Dem's vox pop. Now, the odd thing is that my sister-in-law lives down an idyllic country lane outside Pickering, where half a dozen people might stroll in the course of a busy day. The ability to institute a spontaneous debate in such isolated circumstances is a tribute to Paddy's magnetic powers. When will we - and, in particular, Mrs W's sister - see his like again?



individuals who, very much like the great Claude M, share a desire to "examine the minutiae of daily lives and seemingly ordinary things".

Ulf Lindström achieves this by taking blurry, surreptitious snaps of his utterly unremarkable neighbour in Gothenburg: "I have spied on him and his family for a year now and secretly photographed them. I have completed 100 reels of film." In her equally uplifting slide show, Annelies Strba from

1000 Reels of Film

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which sounds pretty rum to me.

In the established religions there was a complex tradition in which the instinct of faith interacted with centuries of powerful intellects and saintly self-sacrifice to produce a yardstick against which judgements could be made about the acceptability of individual dogmas. One of the chief characteristics of New Age spirituality is that they have none of this, but are cast adrift on a sea of if-it-feels-good-do-it.

As I left I noticed a large bowl full of crystals. "They can concentrate the powers within you," Ruth explained. Was that metaphor or magic, I asked. "Something of each," she replied. That is their attraction - and their danger.

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THE SATURDAY ESSAY

We must not let genes become the gods of our age



JOHN DURANT

When we try to understand ourselves as individual, free, conscious beings, DNA has no special status whatever

TOWARDS THE end of last year, BMW launched its new model 3 series with a TV advertisement in which the car is driven between Perspex sheets covered in DNA "fingerprints". The voice-over tells viewers: "DNA is the very foundation of life. It is responsible for the transmission of hereditary characteristics like strength and power and good looks."

DNA is not just "the very foundation of life"; it is also, it seems, the very height of fashion. In using DNA to launch their latest model in the UK, BMW were merely following in the footsteps of another European car manufacturer. For Renault had already appropriated the DNA fingerprint image (along with Professor Steve Jones of University College London) for use in their own TV commercials earlier in the year. In both cases, the car companies used evolution and genetics to convey the notion of progressive improvement through a series of generations.

But, more than this, they used DNA because of its "powerful imagery", as BMW put it in its accompanying literature. Today, this imagery is to be found not only in TV advertisements, but also in company logos and cartoon strips, on billboards, and in perfumes and "alco-pop" drinks. In perfumes and "alco-pop" drinks. In Britain, a prominent publisher recently advertised its popular science list under the slogan, "Sex, drugs and DNA". Whether this is taken as a spin on sex, lies and videotape, or "sex'n'drugs'n'rock'n'roll", the point remains the same: DNA is glamorous; DNA sells.

In one sense, this is hardly surprising. The spectacular success of molecular genetics in the second half of our century has served to project DNA into the public consciousness in a uniquely powerful way. It may seem hard to believe now, but after Crick and Watson announced their Double Helix in 1953, it took several years before the BBC saw fit to give it any significant radio or TV coverage at all. What seems obvious now - a recent poll in this newspaper showed a clear consensus that Crick and Watson's was the single most important scientific discovery of the 20th century - was not so obvious then. In the Sixties, the Double Helix steadily gained wider currency as a rather beautiful theory of inheritance; but it wasn't until the Seventies that it became clear to most people that this theory could in fact be put to practical use by direct manipulation of DNA itself.

More than anything else, it has been the resulting cascade of new gene technologies that have made DNA so famous. The role of DNA fingerprinting evidence in the O J Simpson trial probably did more to project DNA into public consciousness than all the popularising efforts of scientists and science journalists put together. Over the period from 1988 to 1996, the British public's factual knowledge about most scientific subjects increased only slightly; but during the same period, the number of people who knew that DNA is the material basis of biological inheritance roughly doubled, from 43 per cent to 81 per cent.

Of course, not everything connected with DNA has been universally welcomed. At the same time that many forensic and medical uses of gene technology have been widely hailed, some agricultural uses of gene technology - for example, in the development of genetically modified (GM) foods - have come under a cloud of suspicion. According to the Prince of Wales, for example: "Mixing genetic material from species that cannot breed naturally,



James Watson (left) and Francis Crick with a model of the double-helix structure of the DNA molecule which they discovered

Camera Press

takes us into areas that should be left to God. We should not be meddling with the building blocks of life in this way." (The Prince of Wales's online forum on GM food is at <http://www.princeofwales.gov.uk>)

This is the view also taken by the food retailer Iceland, which has begun to advertise its products on the basis of the fact that they do not contain any GM ingredients.

Thus, we have a curious situation in which some companies are promoting their products by association with gene technology, while others are doing so by freeing their products from that very same association. In Advertising Land, it seems that it's OK for cars to "evolve"; but it's not OK for plants to be "engineered", even if - according to a report published earlier this week on the regulation of genetic modification in agriculture by the House of Lords Select Committee on the European Communities - such engineering could offer "great potential benefits to agriculture, industry, consumers and even to the environment".

As Monsanto has discovered, opposition to GM foods is greater in Europe than it is in North America. As part of an international research programme designed to map changing attitudes to gene technology in Europe, my colleague George Gaskell, at the London School of Economics, has found that significantly more Europeans than Americans possess what he calls "menacing images" of GM foods. Asked a series of identical questions, 30 per cent of Europeans, but only 7 per cent of Americans, agreed that "ordinary tomatoes do not contain genes while genetically modified tomatoes do". Similarly, 24 per cent of Europeans, but only 6 per cent of Americans, agreed that "by eating a genetically modified fruit, a person's genes could also become modified".

In other words, it seems that quite a lot of Europeans are inclined to believe two rather scary things: first, that it's only genetically modified foods that contain genes; and second, that by eating such foods a person's genes could somehow be affected or even infected. Small wonder, you may think, that GM foods have become so controversial in Europe. If the American sociologist Dorothy Nelkin is right in thinking that what she calls "The DNA

Mystique" has projected the gene as a cultural icon, then it seems that this icon is powerful enough to evoke anxiety as well as admiration.

Anxiety about DNA is also apparent in the area of medical science. The Human Genome Project is making rapid progress with mapping and sequencing our entire genetic make-up. In just a few years, we shall know the position and the precise structure of every single gene we possess. Of course, we won't know what all of these genes do. But, even now, there is a long and growing list of genes associated with medically significant characteristics.

In one sense, the simplest of these to deal with are the single genes (such as those for Friedrich's ataxia and cystic fibrosis) that cause serious genetic disease. Once these genes can be easily identified, it is possible to offer genetic counselling to couples who may be at risk of having an affected child. But how shall we deal with genes that merely increase the probability of disease, or genes that are linked with much less serious complaints?

A recent brochure from the pharmaceutical company SmithKline Beecham reviews current research on "a new gene that might affect appetite", as well as work on the genetic basis of heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, Alzheimer's disease, depression and schizophrenia. If you are inclined to doubt that some or all of these diseases are less serious than, say, cystic fibrosis, then simply change the examples to suit your preferences. For the fact is that virtually every significant physical or mental characteristic we possess is going to turn out to be influenced by one or more genes within the human genome.

The vertiginous prospect of being - and being able to influence - the genetic roots of the human condition is, rightly, the cause of a great deal of concern. In Britain today, there is a plethora of government advisory committees dealing with different aspects of human molecular genetics.

There are committees on genetic modification, on scientific advances in genetics, on genetic testing, on gene therapy, and on "xenotransplantation" (the creation of transgenic animals whose organs may be suitable for transplant into humans); and another committee on genetics and insurance is currently being planned. All of

these are in addition to an overarching Human Genetics Advisory Commission and a statutory Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority.

Another equally complicated set of committees looks after the uses of gene technology in agriculture and food production.

Not surprisingly, perhaps, the Government is currently reviewing this baroque committee structure involved in regulating the way we exploit our knowledge of DNA, with a view to simplifying it and making it more open and more accessible to the public.

This is obviously important, but I don't think it's the only challenge ahead. As we continue to learn more about the genetics of the human condition, we are continually tempted to credit DNA with almost supernatural powers to see it almost as a modern, secular substitute for the old, mythical life force. The very success of the molecular geneticists in identifying genes associated with so many different physical and mental characteristics has recently encouraged a great deal of speculation about the existence of "genes for"

all sorts of nebulous traits - from mental ability and sexual orientation, to parenting styles and criminality. We await only a full-blown genetic theory of voting behaviour in general elections before handing over the entire domain of the social sciences and humanities to the safe care of biologists.

This is obviously rubbish. We might be tempted to indulge it as mildly amusing rubbish, were it not for the fact (much bemused by more thoughtful biologists) that the long-standing myth of the unalterability of genetic traits shows no sign of being displaced in popular culture by a more scientifically realistic idea of the role of genetics in human affairs.

With DNA riding high as a cultural icon, it is continually tempting for headline-writers and pundits to lapse into a crude form of genetic determinism in which anatomy (this time in the form of the Double Helix) is destiny.

This is where headlines in the tabloids about "gay genes" ultimately come from; and it's also where a spate of gassy, fatigued "don't-help-yourself" books have recently come from in the United States. In

a rather different sense, even our own Brian Appleyard trips up over this issue in his recent book, *Brave New Worlds* (HarperCollins). In typically intemperate style, Appleyard argues that once we accept a genetic approach to the human condition, we must end by conceding to the gene our human dignity and freedom.

If this were true, then modern genetics would indeed be a threat to traditional humanistic (and, indeed, all religious and spiritual) values. In fact, it simply isn't so.

Of course, we are made of DNA; but we are also made of sinew and muscle; and besides all that, we're the stuff of dreams. All

of these statements are true in their way, but none of them is true as a complete and adequate account of what we are.

When it comes to understanding the evolution of the human race, DNA has special status; for it is through the selection of changes in DNA that human beings evolved. But when it comes to understanding who we are as individual, conscious, free beings, DNA has no special status whatever. It is simply one of the physical ingredients in the mix that went into our development. Knowing more about this ingredient cannot change what we already know about ourselves - that we are feeling, thinking, hopeful creatures; weak and imperfect, to be sure, and much inclined to doubt and indecision, but nonetheless perfectly capable of surprising ourselves and those around us by occasionally choosing to do the right thing.

In all of our current efforts to deal with the implications of what we can do with DNA, we need to make sure that we keep this extraordinary molecule in proper perspective. We can alleviate our condition in this world to a very considerable extent by the wise application of our genetic understanding; but if we are too uncritical in our zeal for DNA as a cultural icon, then we may be tempted to forget what we know about ourselves, and accept instead a crude caricature drawn more from the images created by smart advertising executives than from either science or sober reflection. This would be too high a price to pay for the genetic revolution. Fortunately for us, there is no need whatsoever to pay it.

The author is director of science communication at the Science Museum, and professor of public understanding of science at Imperial College, London



The man behind the Monet show

NORMAN ROSENTHAL, the exhibition secretary of the Royal Academy, is no stranger to controversy. He was curator of the immensely successful and wildly polemical *Sensation* exhibition. That particular show prompted not only outcry among both establishment and public but also the resignation of four academics. He has been formally rebuked for publicly insulting a fellow academic but never sacked, probably thanks to his flair for picking the exhibitions which will attract the crowds and pundits. Nevertheless, I suspect the RA now has him on a shorter leash, as he was cautious about his most recent triumph - a Monet blockbuster which has had the Friends of the Royal Academy

fighting on the street to gain admittance - and didn't insult a soul.

In an attempt to incite outpouring comment, I say, "I know the Royal Academy's accounts have been healthier. Surely a Monet exhibition, which will pull in the crowds, is just a lazy and cynical way of running a gallery."

"Monet is a wonderful artist just like Van Dyck or Kandinsky. And great artists have a way of pulling in the crowds."

But why not a different great artist? After all, one of the last blockbuster exhibitions you showed was Monet. In the early Nineties.

"Well, 'Monet in the '90s' was a very popular exhibition so it seemed perfectly logical to do 'Monet in the

20th Century' which, even for specialists, is a revelation. Monet is a very popular artist. He deals with very serious issues of life and death and reflection and nature."

You've had to turn away Friends of the RA from the exhibition; doesn't this indicate that you've over-reached yourselves, overhyped it?

"Art is actually about publicity anyway. It's about reaching into people's minds."

COLD CALL

SALLY CHATTERTON RINGS NORMAN ROSENTHAL

But why be a friend if you can't get into the exhibition?

"We have 70,000 friends - if 7,000 choose to turn up on the same day, with the best will in the world we can't let them in. It's just a fact. You can only have so many people standing in front of a picture. Art's strength and weakness is that it can't be adequately reproduced."

What is the point of art, for you?

"Art is wonderful. It's a great way

of enjoying being alive. There's no moral imperative like art. It's enjoyable. And the point of life is, as far as possible, to enjoy life."

Where do you see current or modern trends taking art?

"It's difficult enough to recognise where art is now... I don't know. Art is about keeping your eyes open. Looking at art helps you enjoy trees and rubbish tips. There are amazingly beautiful things in the world. The RA is here to propagate those arts of design - drawing and delinating the world."

The RA has been criticised for consisting of fops and not being artsy - would you agree with this?

"The members elect one another and represent a broad range of artists and art. You don't expect 25-year-old kids to be elected."

Turner was admitted aged 24.

"The members are generous people who understand art. They don't represent anything but themselves."

Now that you've helped the RA through its harder times, will you stay much longer?

"I flatter myself that I've made a bit of a difference. And I do love the ephemeral nature of exhibitions. It's never boring, always different."

Is there an exhibition you hold particularly dear?

"I love them all equally. When you look at art it should seem like the only thing in the world. At the moment I'm in love with Monet."

BAROMETER

SEAN O'GRADY

Doll of the week
If you thought the Furries were ghastly, say a big "Hi" to the new toy on the block. "Amazing Amy". She is a "living doll". She whines, gurgles and answers back. She will also fill her nappy with lifelike material and announce the achievement thus: "Whoa! My nose says it's time to change my diaper." Time to move on.

Flop of the week
Another living doll. This one is a bit bigger than Amazing Amy, but Amazing Vanessa also whines, gurgles and answers back. Not content with the film that the BBC is showing her way to fill the daytime schedules, her poor ratings and pannings by the critics are starting to torment her. "I lie there at night with my heart thumping. It's not fair." Whoa! Let us hope that her diaper warnings are timely.

Crow of the week
Hitchcock was right. Amy and Vanessa aren't the only nasty birds out there, and one especially vicious species is about to land on our shores. The Asiatic crow has hitch-hiked as far as Holland and twitchers are getting twitchy about its debut over here. So should we all. It promises to be devastating, a mink of the skies. These crows, a bit smaller than our own Carrion variety, will scavenge and kill pets, domestic animals and local wild birds. Amazing Amy probably wouldn't stand much of a chance either.

Spin of the week
Mandy goes global. He may wrench a few guts on his home turf, but he's still well respected abroad. Reports this week suggest that Mr Mandelson will soon be travelling to Jerusalem to help the Israeli Labour Party in its elections, and offering advice to the ANC in South Africa about the succession to Nelson Mandela, and become unofficial "Minister for Europe" under Robin Cook. Now, Mr Mandelson may be possessed of many gifts, but how he can manage to spin in three continents simultaneously remains mysterious. South Africa should be the most realistic option, however. Sun City, they say, has some excellent night spots.

Image of the week
This "casualty" is part of the re-enactment of the Battle of Isandlwana. The scrap, during the South African Zulu war of 1879, was the British Army's greatest defeat to date at the hands of native warriors. Mind how you go, Peter.



The murder of two women in a quiet village has revealed violence and tension in the Norfolk Fens. By John Davison

Nowhere to run, nowhere to hide

They'll never solve it, never," says Mally, the local coalman, sitting with a bottle of brown ale in the corner of The Globe Inn in Upwell, Norfolk. "How can they? They've got no evidence."

He is talking about the brutal double murder of a spinster dog-breeder and her ageing mother which shocked this Fenland community when it was discovered two weeks ago this weekend. The women were repeatedly stabbed with a six-to-eight-inch knife, and left lying on the floor of their front parlour at their home on the outskirts of the village. It was up to three days before they were discovered.

Outside the room, 14 of the prized pedigree whippets bred by Janice Sheridan, 45, had been left to pine for their dead mistress. Nothing of value had apparently been taken.

Even though about 70 police officers are working on the case, Mally's fatalistic view is shared by many of the locals. Such attitudes speak volumes about the women and the place where they lived and died.

Strangely, few people seem that bothered by the event. "It sounds terrible, but it's like it never happened," says Duncan, the Globe's landlord, a former Royal Navy sailor from the area. "I tell you, if it hadn't been on the telly and in the newspapers, no one would even know about it."

Jan lived with her mother Connie, 79, in almost total seclusion. Their nearest neighbour, also a dog-breeder, says she was probably their best friend, and was the last person to see them alive. But she admits that she knew nothing of their personal lives. The murders were discovered only after Jan failed to turn up for work two days running at the local kennels where she used to help out.

The general view was that the murderers had some kind of grudge against Jan Sheridan, and that her mother was killed as a potential witness. Whoever it was had now slipped back into the normal rhythm of village life or left long ago.

The story, then, is a real murder mystery, worthy of the PD James



The wild East: 'It's gun law round here. Lots of people have got guns - handguns, shotguns, sawn-offs'

crime novels set in this early flat part of the country. It is in the dark undercurrents of the place itself that clues as to how all this could have happened, and why it may never be solved, can best be found.

Upwell, and the adjoining village of Outwell, are known for being the longest settlement in the country. For anyone brought up in a remotely hilly part of the UK, this is an astonishing place to see. Upwell lies exactly 3ft above sea level. Three Holes, a couple of miles south, is also 3ft above the waves.

Above this area of huge, black, fertile fields arch enormous skies - one day a sun-lifting, piercing blue, the next a grey-black canopy. They emit either pink sunsets or driving, unremitting rain.

Upwell was the birthplace of the Rev W V Awdry, and arguably the inspiration for his creation of Thomas the Tank Engine. The village used to have large tram marshalling yards, recently visited by Awdry's son in the company of Andrew Lloyd Webber - he'd come to study two spectacular churches that stand by the river.

The Rev Robin Blackwall, who is in charge of both, says: "There is a sense of shock and distress that such a tragedy should take place within our village community." Special prayers were said for both women at services last Sunday.

Graham Mallet, chairman of the parish council and a society steward at the local Methodist church, is also shocked. "It is a terrible blot on the reputation of the village," he says. "I can't remember anything of this sort of scale happening here before. Violence like this is unheard of."

On paper, at least, this is true. The last murder in the village was in the Seventies, when a local farmer was bludgeoned to death during a burglary, and it was quickly solved.

The son of a former Globe landlord (coincidentally called Sheridan, but no relation) was also killed, about 20 years ago, by a drug-crazed flatmate in Peterborough.

But current Globe regulars paint

a very different picture of village life. Where once you knew everybody, they say, many people are now strangers. Wisbech, just four miles up the road, was recently said to have the highest per capita crime rate in the country, outside London and Liverpool.

"It's gun law round here. Lots of people have got guns - handguns, shotguns, sawn-offs," said one.

Duncan tells of an occasion when someone was in the bar recovering from shotgun wounds, and a group of eight men came charging across the bridge outside, intent on dealing out more punishment. "I had to go outside and stop them. Me! I'm only 5ft 7in," he says cheerfully.

On New Year's Day a gang of local travellers set about a man with baseball bats because he had threatened to "glass" one of their daughters. The police did arrive in force, but no complaint was made and no one was arrested or charged.

Behind it all is the grievance that the police presence here is almost non-existent. One officer does live in the village, but all the local stations close at night. "The copper's are bloody hopeless. If you ring them up they will arrive six weeks later," says a local.

Another local resident even arms himself. "If you want to go out round here, you have to go toolled up, because if you get into trouble there is

Brian Harris

no one to help you," he says, producing a six-inch-long flick knife to prove his point.

A sense of lawlessness prevails. The policeman trying to solve current murders is Detective Superintendent Steve Swain, head of Norfolk CID. Clearly exhausted after many late nights on this case, he still has few leads.

"Usually you can tell right away why a murder happened. But at this stage we can't see an obvious motive," he says. "It doesn't appear to have been a burglary, it doesn't appear to be because someone was disturbed. It seems that it was either a person known to them or a person who had a legitimate reason for being there and being let in."

Many of his hopes seem to be pinned on forensic tests conducted at the murder scene, yet to be processed. One early line of inquiry was that the murders might have had something to do with professional jealousy in the dog-breeding world. Jan was well known in this community, had been a dog-show judge, and had qualified for an entry to Crufts this March. But a trip by officers to a whipper show over the weekend found only people saying nice things about her, apart from her having an occasional bad temper.

The nearest thing to a lead that The Independent turned up was a shopkeeper who said that in the days before she was killed Jan appeared to have had a dramatic change of character.

"Normally she could be, well, almost rude. But on that day she was all smiles and chat. It was very different. It is the only conversation I remember having with her," he says. "Maybe she thought she was on to something good, which turned out wrong."

Another theory was that Jan may have had a secret lover. One story did appear last week, but even that was about a supposed relationship that finished four years ago. At the moment, no significant current relationships have been unearthed, says Det Supt Swain.

And so the investigation continues. In the meantime, life in Upwell goes on as normal - or something that passes for it.

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R U MY SWEETHEART?

I'm 35, solvent, single, silly, with caring nature, seeking for like-minded and sensible male, 30-40, N/S, for friendship initially, Northampton area. 234757

WHO LOVES ME...

...The way I am? Crazy, uncaring, fun-loving, seeks tall, slim, intelligent chap, GSCH, 40+, must love countryside, animals, ancient sights, SW area. 234758

MARS MARCH HAIR

Female, 38, loves countryside, wants to travel, needs tall, slim, intelligent chap, GSCH, 40+, must love countryside, animals, ancient sights, SW area. 234763

WARMHONEY IN LONDON

Tall, attractive, blonde female, early 40s, seeks down-to-earth man, to share films, meals out/in, wine chat and whatever else may happen. 234773

ROCK CLIMBER

Lady, early 40s, seeks male rock-climbing partner, Surrey based. 234774

SEEKING SOMEONE SPECIAL

Oriental female, 34, studying in UK, enjoys music, art, theatre, books, honest, professional, educated, tall white male, 34-40, N/S, with good taste. London area. 234774

CUTE CHARMER

Adorable female, 55+, slim build, dark hair, likes walking, skating, flying, picnics, more, seeks tall, handsome (hopefully) male, 45+, for friendship, possibly more. 234781

SOUTH SOMERSET

Attractive female, 35, intelligent, young 60s, enjoys classical music, the arts, environment, reading, gardening, country walks, countryside, seeks tall, good-looking, educated gentleman, 50-65, with walking boots and sense of direction. 234781

MAKE OUR VALENTINE DAY

Two females, single men, sought for blind date on 14th of February, with two equally gorgeous young, free women. 234782

CHARMING & STYLISH

Female, 30, attractive, sophisticated, good-looking, educated, Asian, Hindu female, 33, interested in the arts based in Northampton, seeks like-minded, unattached, sincere, N/S, male, 33-38, for emotional relationship. Bristol area. 234783

LIFE'S GOOD, MAY BE BETTER

Any romantic, capable of uncontrollable laughter, thoughtful, caring, seeking a strong, caring male, 40+, are you tall, 45+, and not expecting life to be perfect? Let's talk. Surrey based. 234783

BLOND & FIT

Hi there! Attractive male, 36, likes working out, seeks female, 18-40, for fun and excitement. London. 234783

TYPICAL CANCERIAN

Tall, young 55, semi-built, divorced, slim, fit, sporty, practical, good-looking, intelligent female, for long-term relationship. Bristol area. 234783

FRANCOPIPER

Resaxed, considerate, intelligent, tall, slim, divorced male, 54, N/S, likes tennis, classical music, travel, books, seeks similar female, 35-45, for friendship/relationship. Bristol area. 234783

GOOD LOOKS

Male, 55+, muscular build, diverse, 6, in musical/drama, own home, good, friendly, dancing, very sincere, sensitive, generous, seeks similar female, 35-45, for friendship/relationship. Bristol area. 234783

BLUE-EYED BLOND MAN

Male, 40, tall, slim, attractive, blue eyes, new look, looks good, attractive, slim, female, 18-25, for love, sex, fun. Worcester. 234783

INDEPENDENT HEARTS

Independent Hearts

A CULTURAL CONNECTION

Lively, fun-loving, philosophically-minded individual, seeks European, American or similar international outlook, a GSCH and passion for life essential. 234786

MAN ON A MISSION

Amiable, professional bloke, 49, 5'7, fit, into travel, photography, trees, birds, seeks compatible, feminine woman. 10ish. South Midlands. 234786

SPRINGING INTO SOMEBODY SPECIAL

Professional Oriental male, 30, genuine, attractive, seeks kind, friendly, Oriental/white female, 21-30, for friendship, possible relationship. Likes eating out, film, music. 234786

CREATIVE MAN

Male, 33, 5'4, blond, good-looking, illustrator/lecturer, seeks similar female, London. 234772

STRANGER BUT TRUE

Single, successful male, 35, seeks single, comfortable lifestyle, to share music, rocknrolls, laughter. 234813

ONE OFF

Single male, 35, public school, comfortable lifestyle, seeks single lady, under 35. Leicestershire/Northamptonshire area. 234722

LOOK NO FURTHER

Mid 30s, 37, 5'11", average build, tall, slim, friendly, shy, seeks female, 35-50+, sincere, for friendship, possible long-term relationship. 234782

A DATE AT THE TATE

To share a passion for Bomhard Male, 46, 5'2", and fit for more, cycling, sailing, salsa, and travelling. 234782

SURSEY BASED

Lively male, 33, N/S, with friendliness, seeks female, 25-35, for friendship. 234782

FRANCOPIPER

Resaxed, considerate, intelligent, tall, slim, divorced male, 54, N/S, likes tennis, classical music, travel, books, seeks similar female, 35-45, for friendship/relationship. Bristol area. 234783

TURN OVER...

a new leaf, a new year. Good-looking male, 30, loves cinema, theatre, books, 23-35, to share life, seeks female, 23-35, to share life. 234781

ZOOM IN ON THIS!

Lively male, 33, N/S, with friendliness, seeks female, 25-35, for friendship. 234782

GOOD LOOKS

Male, 55+, muscular build, diverse, 6, in musical/drama, own home, good, friendly, dancing, very sincere, sensitive, generous, seeks similar female, 35-45, for friendship/relationship. Bristol area. 234783

INDEPENDENT HEARTS

Independent Hearts

SEAN CONNERY TYPE

Tall, mature, masculine Scottish businessman, interests mainly art-based, would like to meet girls from farming family, any location, all replies acknowledged. 234784

ALARMINGLY NORMAL

Good-looking, professional male, 38, GSCH, easygoing, sensible, friendly, seeks female, 25-37, for friendship/possible relationship. London/Surrey area. 234956

ORIGINAL

Attractive, mature Irish male, 27, honest, open, easy-going, post-graduate, GSCH, seeks female, 25-35, for friendship. 234784

PRESUMABLY GENT

Young 40, seeks attractive, easy-going, tall-medium build, female, 25-35, to share life, seeks long-haired/honey-tall, slim, caring, clean-shaven male. 234779

TALL, DARK AND HANDSOME

London, 27, tall, dark, professional male, 33, seeking warm-hearted, spiritual lady, with wicked SOH, and a passion for life. 234625

PRETENDER

Young 40, seeks attractive, easy-going, tall-medium build, female, 25-35, to share life, seeks long-haired/honey-tall, slim, caring, clean-shaven male. 234779

WHO DARES WINS

Tall, dark, successful male, 32, spontaneous, wild, quiet and adventurous, seeks confident, charming, cheeky, sensitive partner. Cheshire/Cheshire surroundings. 234615

CALL ME

Male, 27, medium build, fun-loving, caring, friendly, pieces, 5'11", quite good-looking, straight-acting, clever, enjoys theatre, cinema, listening to music, sports, long-haired/honey-tall, slim, caring, clean-shaven male. 234779

INDEPENDENT HEARTS

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Mistress of mascara

MY WEEK

VAL GARLAND IS ONE OF THE FASHION WORLD'S MOST SOUGHT-AFTER MAKE-UP ARTISTS. SHE'S JUST FINISHED A WEEK AT THE PARIS COUTURE SHOWS, WHERE SHE WORKED WITH ALEXANDER MCQUEEN. HER LATEST PROJECT IS A GEORGE MICHAEL AND MARY J BLIGE VIDEO

Sunday

Wake up call at 6.30am in a hotel in central Paris. A coach takes me and my team of 11 to the show I like to set up early and have a coffee. Doing shows is a fantastic way to diet because you never get a chance to eat.

We are doing 41 different looks. At this show each model is made up like an individual character. I spoke with the designer Lee (aka Alexander McQueen) and his assistant Katy England about a month ago so that I could research the looks. It's a challenge and I love the stress. It's like a military operation.

Minutes before the show, I'm doing Amber Valletta's make-up and trying to get glitter on to her eyes while five hairdressers are untangling her hair. Lee, meanwhile, is desperate to get her into her outfit. The show starts at 4pm. It is fantastic to see the different characters. Lee and I stand by the monitor as

each girl comes out and another one comes back. I check the lips and the skin on the chin to make sure nothing has been wrecked. At the end of the show we all cheer and have a glass of champagne.

Next we take off all the model's make-up and slowly pack up the kit. It looks like Beirut, glitter and eyelashes everywhere.

Monday

Our first meeting takes place in my hotel room at about 10am. We go through the ideas for the Viktor and Rolf show. We've decided on Fifties make-up and loads of eyelashes.

It's ironic but for someone who works with cosmetics all day I wear barely any make-up. I'm a very clean-scrubbed girl and I don't really have time to bother. I do, however, like to go every two weeks to have my nails manicured. As for clothes, I wear casual combat gear.

The afternoon is spent giving

demonstrations for Viktor and Rolf. I collapse at about 10pm. I really do need my rest.

Tuesday

Get up at 5am. The show starts at 11.30am. The models come out in darkness with only UV light. We have used UV make-up with Fifties lines and Sixties shapes and white beauty spots. The effect is floating make-up images walking down the catwalk.

I catch the train back to London and arrive in Kensal Rise at 10pm. There is a message telling me that tomorrow's start time is 6.30am. I'd hoped that it would be 10ish. I book a wake-up call for 4.45am.

Wednesday

I am doing the make-up for the new Mary J Blige and George Michael video. My assistant and I drive to Stratford. It doesn't take long as there's no traffic. There are four

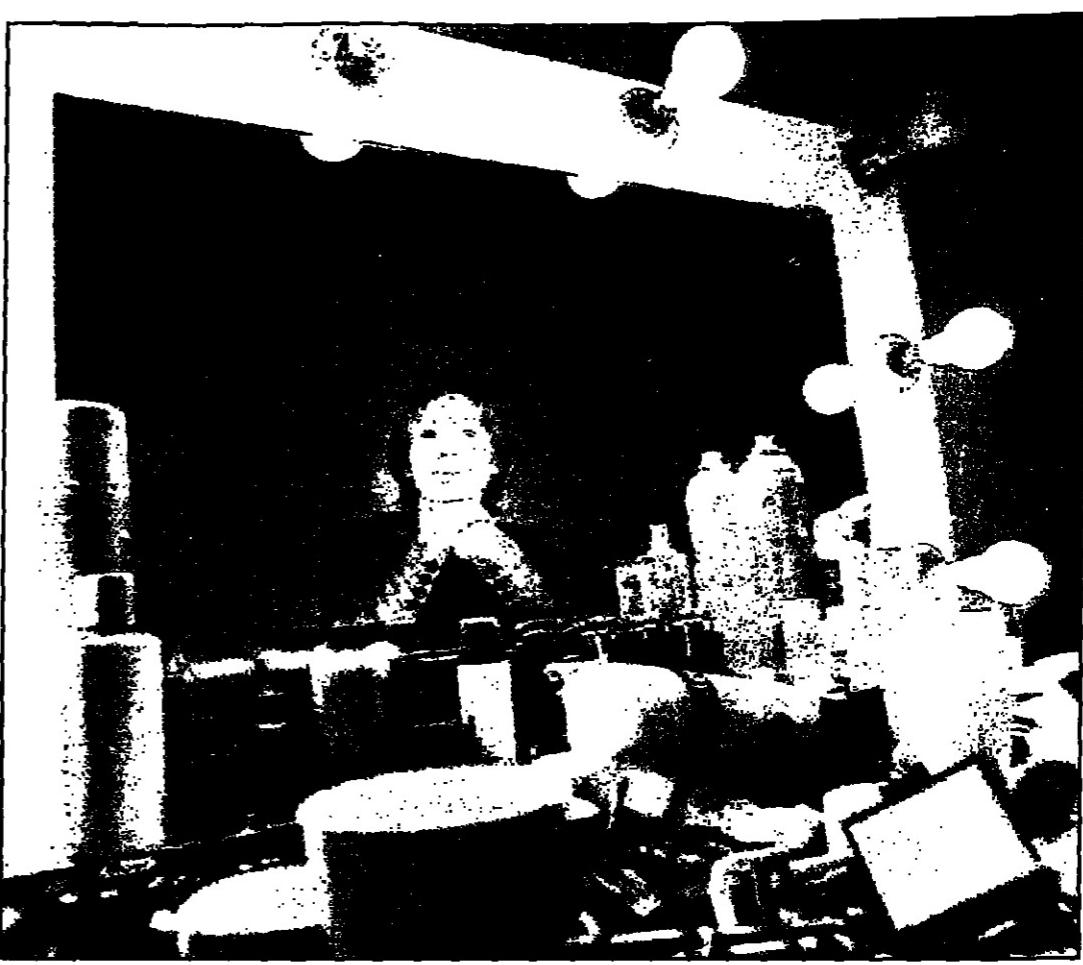
clones of George Michael and Mary J Blige who must all be made to look alike by 8am. The guys must all have beards and a great tan like George. The girls all have to have beauty spots in the same place as Mary J.

George and Mary are fantastically professional people; and they are really nice. I have to check that they are happy with their make-up and feel confident. Today is a short day. Filming finishes at 10.30pm. I must sleep.

Thursday

We are on set by 6.45am. Doing a video is a completely different experience from Paris fashion week. It's like the calm after the storm. I am told that the Rex is a rave club normally but the art department has done a very good job. It looks exclusive - all Louis Vuitton and Gucci. I feel like I'm working in a plush nightclub.

INTERVIEW BY DAISY PRICE



Neville Elder

Blue is the colour, greed is the game – and I'm not playing

MY SON Darcy's eyes light up when he hears the football results on Saturday afternoon, and he's as pleased as punch that Chelsea are top of the table. He can intone "Come on you Blues" a couple of octaves lower than his normal eight-year-old's speaking voice. He knows how to shout: "It's Franck Leboeuf!" when he makes a tackle, and "Flu shoots" when he's shot on goal, but he would be hard-pressed to recognise most of the team. His support is more theoretical than physical – we live only two miles from Stamford Bridge, but Darcy might as well be in the Malaysian branch of the fan club for all his attendance.

I blame myself to some extent. After all, I encouraged him to support Chelsea when he first started showing an interest in football, and have singularly failed to take him to watch their matches since then. It is simply not realistic for fathers to shell out £20 a head for tickets more than once or twice a season.

I nudged Darcy towards Chelsea on the basis that a boy should support his local club, fearing that left to his own devices he might opt for Manchester United, or worse still, Arsenal (Manchester United without the romance). How was I to know, just three or four years ago, that Chelsea, perennial mid-

table under-achievers, were about to metamorphose into the epitome of a fashionable and wealthy football club?

As it happens, the family allegiance goes back more than 40 years. My father lived within striking distance of Stamford Bridge during the 1956 season when Chelsea won the Championship for the only time in their history. He used to boast that they were the worst team ever to win the league.

For myself, I spent my early football-supporting years watching Oxford United under the captaincy of the bully but unskilled Ron Atkinson. He was known as "The Tank", and was

who spent much of the match keeping out of the way of thugs five years their seniors. I'm still oddly proud of having been punched in the head by a Manchester United fan, irate that his team had to slum it for a while in the old Second Division.

I don't want to rehearse once again the economic and safety reasons why top-flight professional football is now played in all-seater stadiums to crowds of season-ticket-holders who have paid up to £1,000 for the privilege. Chelsea, greedy though they may be, are not alone; even mid-status clubs such as Derby County play mostly to sold-out crowds. But I'm not prepared to

change my football-watching habits. I want to turn up for a match whenever the mood takes me – and I don't want another financial liability, to add to the job, the mortgage and the fact that his team had to slum it for a while in the old Second Division.

So where does Darcy fit in? Well, he'll continue to get his treat of a live match once or twice a season if he's lucky, plus the occasional glimpse of his heroes on television. In future years, no doubt he'll look for ways of going to Stamford Bridge more often, although I doubt whether there are enough highly paid chores around the house for him to become a Chelsea regular.

And there's always Fulham, Chelsea's neighbours and

traditional rivals, where I can give Darcy a taste of the good old days. We'll turn up a few minutes before 5pm and stand on the terrace munching hot dogs while a bunch of footballers who can't speak a word of French or Italian, and haven't got a World Cup-winner's medal between them, labour around the pitch.

But I'll have to coach Darcy carefully on the way there. I've just heard of a father who, unwilling or unable to pay Stamford Bridge prices, took his young son to watch Fulham instead. "Dad," the little voice piped up five minutes into the match, "which colour is Chelsea wearing?" Oh dear – rumbled.

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Robert Douglas

ANY ANTHOLOGY of great film duels would have to include the fight on the grand staircase between Errol Flynn and Robert Douglas in *The Adventures of Don Juan*.

Douglas had a long and prolific career in show business, as an actor on stage, screen and television, and later as a director but he will be best remembered for the string of superbly urbane and arrogant villains he portrayed after settling in Hollywood in 1948. An expert swordsman, he battled on screen with such action heroes as Flynn, Robert Taylor, Stewart Granger and Burt Lancaster, giving them a determined, if not always totally fair, fight before being ultimately and inevitably vanquished.

Born Robert Douglas Finlaysen in Bletchley, Buckinghamshire, in 1904, he was educated at Bickley Hall in Kent then studied for the stage at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. He made his acting debut in 1927 at the Theatre Royal, Bournemouth, in *The Best People*, and his first London appearance the following year playing Godfrey Marvin in *Many Waters* at the Ambassadors Theatre.

In *A Bill of Divorcement* (1929) he played Kit (the role played by David Manners in the 1932 screen version), and the same year made his first New York appearance repeating his role in *Many Waters*. He had become much in demand and in 1930 starred in three more West End shows before returning to Broadway to repeat his role in one of them, Frank Harvey's *The Last Enemy*, a fantasy described by one critic as "murky, incoherent and generally doddering", which lasted only four performances.

London plays in 1931 included *After All* and *Vile Bodies*, then he returned to New York to star with the famed critic and columnist Alexander Woolcott in S.N. Behrman's comedy *Brief Moment*. Douglas won excellent notices for his playing of an introverted millionaire who marries an extrovert singer, but later recalled that relations between Woolcott (in his first acting role) and his leading lady Francine Larrimore were strained, and that Behrman had to cut some of Woolcott's funniest lines because Larrimore said the laughs broke her concentration.

After playing in Anthony Armstrong's ingenious thriller *Ten-Minute Alibi* (1933) at the fringe Embassy Theatre Douglas entered theatrical management in partnership with Ronald Adam and together,

The Adventures of Don Juan established him as a prime exponent of suave villainy

navy captain helping a kidnapped son's daughter escape South American revolutionaries in *Our Fighting Navy* (1937), but a villain again in *London Melody* (1937) with Anna Neagle.

Concurrently with his stage work, he also had major film roles in the comedy *Over the Moon* (1937) with Rex Harrison and Merle Oberon, the mountaineering drama *The Challen* (1938) with Luis Trenker, a propaganda piece about the outbreak of the Second World War, *The Lion Has Wings* (1939), and the third screen version of the melodramatic play *The Chinese Bungalow* (1939), but, though a sometimes top-billed player, he failed to attain major stardom.

From 1939 to 1945 Douglas served in the Fleet Air Arm, after which he briefly returned to the London stage before moving to America and taking up the offer of a contract with Warners. He was given starring role in his first film for them, Peter Godfrey's *The Decision of Christopher Blake* (1943), a dire drama about the effect of bickering parents on a sensitive child, but his next role,



Dastardly Douglas in *Don Juan*, 1952

Ronald Grant Archive

as the scheming Duke de Lores in Vincent Sherman's *The Adventures of Don Juan* (1948), established him as a prime exponent of suave villainy.

Besides his fencing prowess he was considered to be of a world-class standard! Douglas brought expert shadings and colour to his role of a scoundrel planning to depose the monarchs and become dictator of Spain, and the final duel, beautifully choreographed and shot to the background of a rousing Korngold score on a grand staircase specially constructed for the production, is breathtaking. As he draws his sword Douglas tells Flynn, "I warn you, señor, this time I will cut deeply", and the duel ends with Flynn tossing aside his sword as he states, "The sword is not for a traitor - you die by the knife", before he leaps from midway up the staircase to the floor below to finish off the villain.

Though he played occasional sympathetic roles - a dedicated detective in *Homicide* (1949), a lawyer in *Barbecue* (1950), Agamemnon in *Helen of Troy* (1956) - it was as rogues that

Douglas made the strongest impact. In *The Fourposterhead* (1939), King Vidor's overblown but entertaining transcription of Ayn Rand's salute to the single-minded innovator (inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright), was dispensed with his usual toupee as a venomous art critic who despises true talent, describing modern architecture as "worthless, because it is merely the work of a few unbridled individualists".

A treacherous nobleman in Jacques Tourneur's buoyant medieval romp *The Flame and the Arrow* (1950), Douglas is confident of victory as he draws his sword against Burt Lancaster as an outlaw hero who is proficient only with bow and arrow, until Lancaster gains the upper hand by cutting down the chandeliers and plunging the room into virtual darkness. In *At Sword's Point* (1951), Douglas was again plotting to take over a throne until stopped by the offspring of the original "three musketeers", and he was similarly dastardly in *Juarez* (1952), *The Prisoner of Zenda* (1952), *The Fourposterhead* (1952).

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King Richard and the Crusaders (1954), and *The Scarlet Cloth* (1955).

Vincent Sherman's enjoyable soap opera *The Young Philadelphians* (1959), starring Paul Newman, was Douglas's last film, but he did not stop working. He acted in television productions of *The Barretts of Wimpole Street* and *The Browning Version* and took guest roles in *Columbo*, *The Vigilantes* and other series. He directed some Broadway plays, but he became primarily a television director, making over 200 shows, including *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* (10 episodes), *The Roaring Twenties* and *The Virginian*. A few years ago he stated that he did not "greatly miss acting".

TOM VALLANCE

Robert Douglas Finlaysen (Robert Douglas), actor; born Bletchley, Buckinghamshire 9 November 1904; married 1935 Dorothy Hyson (marriage dissolved 1943), secondly Sue Weldon (née Wilkinson; one son, one daughter); died Encinitas, California 18 January 1999.

Rollo Ballantyne

ROLLO BALLANTYNE was one of those rare collectors who brought to his interest in contemporary ceramics both a sense of genuine discovery and real enthusiasm for what was a little charted subject. Although until his retirement he served as a much respected and admired doctor in general practice, his enduring memorial will be the Ballantyne Collection, a substantial group of ceramics by contemporary studio potters which he saw as able to stand alongside other art forms.

Ballantyne was one of triplets born in Nottingham to a father who was a Unitarian minister in a family where involvement in the arts was through music rather than visual art. Medicine became his chosen choice of career and Rollo together with his triplet brother John entered St Mary's Medical School in London, graduating in 1942. Both were then sent on war service to Gibraltar where Rollo met and married Tym Watcherspoon, who was a serving Wren.

After the Second World War they settled in Walton-on-Thames in Surrey, where he worked as GP and raised a family, remaining until his retirement in 1977. Inspired by the work and ideas of his eldest brother, David, a distinguished potter, innovator and teacher, Rollo and his second wife, Marion, had by then started, almost by chance, to collect ceramics.

During a rather damp holiday in the West Country they remembered that the area was home to many well-known potters. Rollo telephoned his brother David to ask which ones they should visit and was advised to call on Michael Cardew, whose pottery was situated at Wenford Bridge on the edge of Dartmoor. Then in his seventies, but still at the height of his powers as a potter, Cardew made a great impression both in the vigour of his pots and the force of his character. Their first purchases included a ceramic stool which Cardew assured them was sufficiently strong to support an elephant should they have one. They returned many times to Wenford Bridge to add to their growing collection.

They were bitten by the "clay bug", and their collection grew rapidly. They explored the extensive range of vessel-based contemporary work, whenever possible visiting potters in their studios as well as keeping track of exhibitions. They took an eclectic view, ranging from more decorative items such as fine bowls and dishes by Lucie Rie, whom they commissioned to make a magnificently elegant bottle in pinks, greys and soft green (it was featured on the cover of *Ceramic Review*), to the tiny, exquisite pod-like forms of Geoffrey Swindell.

Both Ballantynes had a passion for more functional pots which they were able to enjoy in daily use. These included the flame-and-wood-toasted tablewares of Winchcombe Pottery, the celadon-glazed pots of Richard Batterham and the subtle forms of David Leach. As space in their home began to run out they directed their attention to precisely made smaller pieces, acquiring tiny boxes by John Maitby and diminutive bowls by Gwyn Hanssen.

By the late 1970s the Ballantynes were running out of space, so sought a public venue for their collection, to ensure it had a permanent home where it could be enjoyed by others. In 1978, 80 pieces were installed in purpose-built cases in Sudbury Hall in Derbyshire, a National Trust property administered by Derbyshire County Council.

A year later these pots were joined by the Derbyshire Schools Loan Collection, which was particularly notable for its early pieces by such potters as Bernard Leach, Janet Leach, Katherine Pleydell-Bouverie and Hans Coper. The Ballantynes continued to give generously to the collection and purchases were made with the help of East Midlands Arts. In 1992 it was relocated within Derby University where not only was it more easily accessible to the public but served as vital reference for ceramic students at the university's School of Art and Design.

In 1996 the Ballantyne Collection was moved to Nottingham Castle Museum and contextualised within a wider department of decorative art. An appropriate acquisitions policy was devised and the terms of the collection defined. Needless to say the Ballantynes continued acquiring new pieces, as alert to the work of newcomers as established potters. Having settled in Chipping Campden in the heart of the Cotswolds they enjoyed the area's long association with a wide variety of craft, with Rollo Ballantyne learning the skills of silversmithing.

Through the Ballantynes' original commitment to modern work, and their ability to trust their own judgement, they formed a collection that is a persuasive combination of individual choice set within a wide-ranging catholicism, which as such will continue to inspire, delight and inform.

EMMANUEL COOPER

James Rollo Ballantyne, medical practitioner and ceramics collector; born Nottingham 26 September 1917; married first Tym Watcherspoon (two sons, one daughter; marriage dissolved), second Marion James; died Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire 30 December 1998.

James McClelland



'Shouting from the rooftops'

JAMES MCCLELLAND was a flamboyant Australian judge, politician, raconteur and newspaper columnist who made his mark by flouting convention. He was known as "Diamond Jim" because of his stylish clothes and dandyish ways.

As the judge who presided over Australia's Royal Commission inquiry into British nuclear tests in Australia, McClelland took on the British establishment when he demanded the release of thousands of secret documents. Thanks largely to his initiative, the full story of Britain's atmospheric nuclear weapons tests down under was revealed, and the contaminated test sites in outback South Australia are finally being cleaned up.

McClelland was 69 when the Labor government in Canberra under Bob Hawke appointed him to head the Royal Commission in August 1984. The inquiry was Canberra's political response to mounting claims in the press that British and Australian ex-service men had contracted cancer and other fatal illnesses from being exposed to radioactive fallout from the 12 atomic weapons tests that Britain conducted in Australia between 1952 and 1957 in its quest to build an independent nuclear deterrent. Most happened at Maralinga in South Australia.

As the inquiry revealed, there were also hundreds of so-called "minor trials", tests on weapons components involving the burning, explosion and disbursement across the test range of plutonium and other radioactive materials. They left the site unfit for human occupation. These minor trials were conducted in great secrecy from November 1953 to September 1961, when Britain was party to an international nuclear test moratorium.

If Canberra and London thought McClelland's inquiry might whitewash this Anglo-Australian Cold War adventure, they were mistaken. During its first four months of hearings in Australia, Margaret Thatcher's government ignored the inquiry by declining to send anyone to represent Britain. By the time the inquiry moved to Britain in December 1984, London could ignore it no longer.

McClelland set the tone in a carefully prepared opening address at

their traditional lands for 30 years. McClelland took the inquiry back to Maralinga, where he and the lawyers sat in the red dust and listened to the Aborigines' stories. The Aborigines have since received millions of dollars in compensation, and are gradually rebuilding their communities adjacent to the test sites.

As for the sites themselves, London for a long time refused to accept McClelland's call, in the inquiry's final 1985 report, for Britain to bear the full cost of a proper clean-up. Britain has since contributed equipment and experts to a state-of-the-art nuclear clean-up exercise with Australia, which might never have happened had McClelland not "shouted from the rooftops".

McClelland's feistiness was not confined to the hearing rooms. At the time of the inquiry, he publicly defended Margaret Thatcher as "that silly woman" and Bob Hawke as a "pygmy". His iconoclasm probably went back to his Irish Catholic roots in Melbourne, where he was born in 1915, the son of a railway painter. He won scholarships to St Kevin's College, a leading Roman Catholic boys' school, and to the University of Melbourne. McClelland ditched his religion early on ("It bored me") for a brief flirtation with Trotskyism. After serving in the Australian air force during the Second World War, he studied Law at the University of Sydney, then settled in Sydney to build a lucrative practice specialising in industrial law.

This brought him into close contact with the Australian Labor Party, for which he won a seat in the Senate the upper house in Canberra, in 1971. In 1975, during the last months of the Labor government headed by Gough Whitlam, he served as minister first for manufacturing industry, then for labour and immigration. McClelland never identified with any one group in the faction-ridden New South Wales Labor Party, and he was quite prepared to attack his former Labor "mates" when he was enraged about something. One of them was the late Sir John Kerr, a close friend of McClelland from their days in Sydney's legal world, whom Whitlam later appointed governor-general, the Queen's representative. When Kerr sensationally

sacked Whitlam's government in November 1975, McClelland felt that he and the Labor Party had been deeply betrayed. He turned against Kerr, describing him as "a licksplitter from the wrong side of the tracks who always wanted to get to the big end of town, moved to the right and charmed the Sydney establishment to get there".

After McClelland left politics disillusioned in 1978, Neville Wran, then Labor premier of New South Wales, appointed him chief judge of the land and environment court, the tribunal that adjudicated on the conflicting interests of development and conservation. Wran, too, felt the backlash from McClelland's tongue when he decided to flout McClelland's ruling that a football stadium could not be built because it would intrude on the historic precincts of Parramatta Park in Sydney. Wran's government passed a special law and the stadium was built. A furious McClelland retorted: "Jim proposes, Neville disposes."

For the last 12 years, McClelland wrote a regular column for *The Sydney Morning Herald*. He had always really wanted to be a journalist, he once said, and he indulged his love of language by writing across a broad range of issues. He was quite outspoken and at his most readable in attacking both sides of politics, but he was also intensely loyal to those former colleagues whom he had managed to avoid being corrupted by the political process.

In his final column on 9 November last year, he wrote: "I have not received a warning fax from the grim reaper, tenuous though my grip on life may be. I have just decided to put my pen down, literally."

ROBERT MILLIKEN

James Robert McClelland, judge, politician and writer; born Melbourne, Victoria 3 June 1915; member Australian Senate 1971-78; judge New South Wales Industrial Court 1978-80; chief judge, New South Wales Land and Environment Court 1980-85; Chairman, Royal Commission into British Nuclear Weapons Tests in Australia 1984-85; three times married (one son, one daughter); died Wentworth Falls, New South Wales 16 January 1999.

Dr R. W. Torrance

R. W. TORRANCE was known by physiologists throughout the world for his research and writings on the arterial chemoreceptors of the carotid bodies, tiny organs which sense the oxygen in the arterial blood and stimulate breathing when it falls. To Oxford undergraduates he was a large, warm-hearted man and a highly perceptive teacher.

He was born in 1923 in Wolverhampton, where his father taught physics to the sixth form of a local school. When the family moved to Yorkshire in the 1930s, Torrance attended Bradford Grammar School, going through the middle school on the classical side. Attracted to the idea of becoming a doctor, he switched to sciences in the sixth form, but finding chemistry "rather dull" he concentrated on maths and physics, winning a Hastings Scholarship to Queen's College, Oxford, in 1941.

At Queen's he read Physiology and Medicine and after gaining first class honours in Physiology in 1945, he was encouraged by Professor J.H. Burn to spend a year doing research. After a rather unproductive term in the department of Pharmacology, he migrated to Physiology, where his work moved forward rapidly under the supervision of Dr (later Professor) David Whitteridge. Noting that being born in Staffordshire made Torrance eligible for a Fereday Fellowship, he agreed to do so and after clinical studies at University College Hospital, six months as a house physician to Sir Francis Walshe and two years in the Royal Army Medical Corps, he became Fellow and medical tutor at St John's in 1952.

In addition to his college duties, Torrance became departmental demonstrator with teaching duties and a small research laboratory in the University Laboratory of Physiology. In the six years since his election to the Fereday fellowship, several groups had started to investigate the properties of motor innervation of muscle spindles, so he decided to examine the properties of sensory nerves arising with receptors in the lungs and blood vessels.

His first substantial piece of research, however, was carried out on haemodynamics with another recent appointee to the department, Jean Banister. In a series of well-planned experiments they demonstrated unambiguously how blood flow through the lungs is influenced by the pressures in the air passages. Their single paper describing this was followed by a flurry of work in the United States for the phenomenon had important applications in medicine.

With the paper in press, Torrance took a year's sabbatical leave in the US and here he met Margaret Aspinwall, who became his wife. On his return to Oxford in 1960 Torrance started to work on arterial chemoreceptors and over the next 15 years he and his students reported some of their most important properties. They described the responses to steady and rapidly changing stimuli and demonstrated that impulses from the chemoreceptors only have reflex effects on the rate and depth of breathing during the time when the animal or person is breathing in. This phenomenon appears to be general for all stimuli to breathing transmitted to the brain by sensory nerves. It reflects the restraints on the

nerve cells which regulate the movements necessary for each breath. Apart from experimental work, Torrance generated a wider interest in arterial chemoreceptors through a symposium which he organised in 1966 and through his many scholarly reviews. In these he developed ideas about mechanism analytical, comparing the predictions with published observations.

The ability to review areas in a broad yet analytical way was one of the things that made Bob Torrance an excellent tutor. But his most attractive quality was his generosity and the genuine warmth of his manner. A very large man (he was often 6ft and at times approached 20 stones), he showed gentleness and consideration to others. He was particularly good with young people, finding common experiences or allegiances. He enjoyed talking and listening and, faced with progressive deafness from early middle age, approached it stoically and uninhibitedly, producing the microphone of his hearing aid to be spoken into if he had difficulty following the conversation.

He also delighted in being a fellow of St John's. His pleasure increased when the college repossessed St Giles House, formerly the Judges' Lodgings in Oxford. Torrance moved his teaching room there, appreciating that with its elegant garden and being almost adjacent to the college, it was a wonderful place to entertain pupils, colleagues and friends. There can be few who taught medicine in Oxford in the 1970s and 1980s who did not enjoy the Torrances' hospitality.

Bob Torrance retired as an Emeritus Fellow in 1990 and continued to think and to write on a range of physiological subjects. He presented his last paper to the Physiological Society in September 1998.

CHARLES MICHEL

Robert William Torrance, physiologist; born 4 September 1923; Fellow, St John's College, Oxford 1946-90 (Emeritus); medical tutor 1952-90; Departmental Demonstrator, University Laboratory of Physiology, Oxford University 1952-58; University Lecturer 1958-90; married 1960 Margaret Aspinwall (two sons); died Oxford 8 January 1999.



Large and warm-hearted

Raymond Peynet

PEYNET'S LOVERS - "Les Amoureux de Peynet" - were known throughout France and beyond in the 1950s and 1960s. Created by the artist and designer Raymond Peynet, the two charming, whimsical characters - the little poet, immaculately dressed, adorned with a bowler hat and accompanied by his lady friend - had a simple way of amusing, and communicating with everyone. They conveyed love and peace as well as a sweet kind-hearted and romantic message; above all they were very French.

Peynet was born in Paris in 1903 and attended a local school before studying at the Ecole des Arts Appliqués. He started his career as an advertising designer in Paris in the 1930s in partnership with his wife Denise. When war broke out, the Peynets closed their agency and moved with their young daughter to the Auvergne in the unoccupied region of France, where Peynet worked as a war correspondent for Max Favalelli, the editor of the review *Ric et Rac*.

While on a visit to Valence in the Rhône valley in 1942, Peynet was inspired by the beautiful handstand in the town. In the early hours of a clear spring morning he sat on a beach and began to draw. Letting his imagination go, he created a romantic vision of a lone violinist playing in the bandstand with a young lady listening. These were the characters he later developed into "Les Amoureux de Peynet". Named by Max Favalelli, the first drawing appeared in *Ric et Rac* just at the end of the war.

Returning to Paris in October 1945, Peynet resumed his work as an illustrator and designer and began to develop and promote his new characters. During the 1950s the lovers grew in popularity and appeared everywhere, featuring regularly in newspapers, in magazines such as *Elle* and *Paris Match* and on posters advertising Air France, Galeries Lafayette and various film studios, as well as on record covers, postcards, wine and champagne labels, silk scarves, postage stamps and jewellery. The prestigious German porcelain manufacturers Rosenthal

worked with Peynet and created a series of his designs on porcelain and glass.

Inspired by his interest in designing stage sets and costumes for the theatre, Peynet produced a series of over 200 dolls of the lovers in a variety of costumes. These sold in millions all over the world. When the Queen made her first official visit to France in 1957, she was presented with a set of Peynet dolls as a gift for the young Princess Anne.

"Les Amoureux" were so well known that they inspired Georges Brassens and Marcel Aumont, fashionable French singers in the 1950s, to include them in their songs, and an animated film, *Around the World with Peynet's Lovers* (1973), was made in Italy with music by Ennio Morricone. The popularity of Peynet's lovers crossed French borders. Anthologies of his drawings were translated into 10 languages and published in 13 countries. His work was first published in England in the 1950s by Per-

'My vision of France in the 1950s is Brigitte Bardot and Les Amoureux de Peynet'

petua, run by Kaye Webb, then wife of the artist and humorist Ronald Searle, who both became friends of Peynet. Later Penguin published his work.

In Japan, the interest in Peynet's lovers is such that in 1995, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the end of the war in the East, a life-size bronze statue of them was inaugurated at Hiroshima; the theme was Love and Peace. There are two museums in France - one in Antibes and the other in the Auvergne - as well as one in Japan, dedicated to Peynet and his work.

From the 1970s Peynet and his family shared their time between Paris and the South of France, where they acquired



Peynet's *Les Amoureux aux Colombe* ('Lovers with Doves'), 1950

a property near Antibes. Peynet turned to painting and produced a series of over 100 lithographs which were published in limited editions. He ceased working in 1994. Two years later, after the death of his wife Denise, his lifelong companion and inspiration, Peynet went into a slow decline. Now the poet has been reunited with his muse.

Over the past few years there has been a renewal of interest in the work of Peynet and it has become collectable world-wide. Last year major exhibitions took place in London and Paris and a book entitled *Peynet Collections* (1988, by André Renaudo) was published in England by Richard Dennis Publications.

Coincidentally there will be an exhibition of lithographs at the Bell Street Gallery in Shaftesbury, Dorset, in February. In a career which spanned 50 years, Raymond Peynet established the lovers as one of the icons of modern France, held in huge affection. As one Peynet fan said, "My vision of France in the 1950s is Brigitte Bardot and *Les Amoureux de Peynet*".

ANDRÉ RENAUDET

Raymond Peynet, artist and designer: born Paris 16 November 1903; married 1930 Denise Damour (died 1996; one daughter); died Mougins, France 14 January 1999.

Emilie Huntly-Grant

EMILIE HUNTLY-GRANT won the DSO after being parachuted behind Japanese lines on increasingly hazardous missions with British intelligence in the closing years of the Second World War. Her fortune had first been tested when, as a schoolgirl in her native Austria, she was beaten and tortured by Nazis who tried, unsuccessfully, to force her to reveal the hiding place of her Jewish friends. Almost all her relatives, from pensioners to infants, later perished in the concentration camps. The effects of the brutality stayed with her all her life.

She was recruited as a British agent after several years' voluntary work with the Red Cross in Calcutta, for whom her mother was president. Emilie was trained as a parachutist and radio operator in India and Burma - far removed from her previous duties of helping wounded soldiers regain the use of their limbs.

True to her oath of secrecy, she never revealed much about her war, though she knew she could have written a book. She enjoyed being dropped

into south-west China because the girl soldiers with whom she worked were always cheerful. The hardest part of the job, she recalled, was preparing landing sites for Allied aircraft to pick her up. Capture would have guaranteed torture and execution by the Japanese, but she accepted each mission and remained with British intelligence until the end of the war; when she received her DSO. She left India in 1946.

She was born Emilie Sperber in Vienna, where her father Heinz was the Oberbaurat, or head architect, for the Austrian State Railways. Her relations were mainly professionals and intellectuals. Following the German Anschluss in 1938, her mother and father refused to join the Nazi party and her father was dismissed from all his government positions.

Their family home, estate and possessions were all confiscated and they were ordered to leave Austria. Emilie and her mother left in October 1938, but her father was refused permission. He died of a heart attack shortly before he

was due to join his family the following May, after accepting a commission from the Indian Finance Ministry. Among Emilie's distinguished relatives who were exterminated were the advocate and judge Hugo Sperber; Otto Bondiner, the writer, poet and editor of *Austria's Die Presse*; and Arthur Kolisch, chief librarian at the University of Vienna.

Emilie was surprised when three captured German officers - in native clothing - were brought to her for interrogation in Calcutta. She never revealed why they had been in India, but one confessed to murdering a young boy in a village. A Gurkha drew his knife and offered to decapitate the Nazi among the three - one of them refused to speak but kept declaring his Nazi credentials.

In 1946 she married her first husband, Lt Edward Carter, and they went to live in England where she later graduated from Leeds University and Leeds School of Art as a ceramic artist. She wrote a thesis on Aztec art, and one of her ceramic figures was accepted by

the Royal Academy, London, for the Summer Show.

They later emigrated to New Zealand, where she and her husband lectured in languages at Christchurch University. Emilie was a fine singer and played a major part in university social life. After four years the marriage failed and she returned to London, where she lived frugally with friends from Vienna and brought up her daughter alone.

She remarried in 1966, to John Huntly-Grant, and they lived in Glasgow, Elgin and finally Edinburgh, where she died of a stroke following a short illness. Emilie Huntly-Grant was cheerful, strong-willed and selfless; her bravery throughout times of terrible trauma remains an inspiration.

CAMPBELL THOMAS

Emilie Sperber, intelligence agent and ceramic artist: born Vienna 21 August 1921; DSO 1945; married 1946 Edward Carter (one daughter; marriage dissolved); 1966 John Huntly-Grant (one son); died Edinburgh 8 January 1999.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

DEATHS

SPENCER: Irene (née Windstone, of Cottenham and Wixham; born 8 June 1916, died 10 January 1999. Memorial gathering 31 January. Telephone 01278 683349.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Duke of York, Patron in Chief, British Schools Exploring Society (BSES) today presents the prize at the Annual Gathering of the BSES at the Royal Geographical Society, Kensington Gore, London SW1.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD
TODAY: The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard, Horse Guards, 11am; 1st Battalion Welsh Guards mounts the Queen's Guard, Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Scots Guards. **TOMORROW:** The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard, Horse Guards, 10am.

BIRTHDAYS

TODAY: Dame Mary Arden, High Court Judge, and chairman, Law Commission, 52; Lord Denning, former Master of the Rolls, 100; Sir John Grenville, chartered accountant, 78; Brigadier Donald Hardie, Lord-Lieutenant, Strathclyde Region (Dumbarton), 63; Mr Rutter Hauer, actor, 55; Mr Bill Haydon, former Governor-General of Australia, 66; Sir Harold Hood, former Editor, *Catholic Who's Who*, 83; Mr Thomas Hudson, former chairman, ICL Ltd, 84; Miss Jeanne Moreau, actress, 71; Miss Christine Nicholls, former editor, *Dictionary of National Biography Supplements*, 56; Mr Ted Rowlands MP, 59; Sir Kenneth Scott, former Deputy Private Secretary to the Queen, 68; Dr Paul Slack, Principal, Linacre College, Oxford, 56; Lord Strathearn, motorist and writer, 76; Lord Sutherland, a Senator of the College of Justice in Scotland, 67; Mrs Joan Walley MP, 50; Mr Brian Weight, former Chief Constable, Dorset, 63.

TOMORROW: Mr Ernest Borgnine, actor, 82; Mr Rafael Caldera Rodriguez,

ANNIVERSARIES

TODAY: Births: Stendhal (Henri-Marie Beyle), novelist, 1733; Edouard Manet, painter, 1832. Deaths: William Baffin, explorer, 1622; William Pitt the Younger, statesman, 1806; Charles Kingsley, poet and novelist, 1875; Anna Pavlova, ballerina, 1931; Edward Munch, painter, 1844; Sir

Alexander Korda (Sandor Laszlo Korda), film producer, 1956; Paul Bustill Robeson, actor and singer, 1976. On this day: the Royal Exchange, London, was opened by Queen Elizabeth I, 1571. Fletcher Christian and the Bounty mutineers landed on Pitcairn Island, 1790; the proceedings of the House of Lords were televised for the first time, 1985. Today is the Feast Day of St Asclias, St Bernard of Vienne, Saints Clement and Agathangelus, St Emerentiana, St Ildephonsus, St John the Almsgiver, St Luphildus and St Maimbod.

TOMORROW: Births: Hadrian, Roman emperor, 76; William Congreve, playwright, 1670; Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais, playwright, 1732; Edith Newbold (Jones) Wharton, novelist, 1862. Deaths: Caligula, Roman emperor, assassinated 41; Amedeo Modigliani, painter and sculptor, 1920; Sir Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill, statesman, 1965. On this day: Henry III, King of England, married Eleanor of Provence, 1236; the Central Statistical Office was founded, 1941; Mae West made a London stage debut in her own play, *Diamond Lil*, 1948.

TOMORROW: Victoria and Albert Museum: Frances Musker, "17th-century Dress and Textiles", 2pm.

Tate Gallery: Laurence Bradbury, "A Spirit of Wildness in 20th-century Art", 1pm.

National Portrait Gallery: Richard Hansell, Max Beerbohm, "Byron, the Poet: his life, told through his poetry", 3pm (telephone 0171-312 2463 for tickets).

LECTURES

TODAY: National Gallery: Richard Stemp, "New Beginnings (iv): Sebastiano del Piombo, *The Raising of Lazarus*", 12pm.

Victoria and Albert Museum: Beth McMillan, "Floral Decoration in Korean Art", 2pm.

Tate Gallery: Laurence Bradbury, "A Spirit of Wildness in 20th-century Art", 1pm.

National Portrait Gallery: Richard Hansell, Max Beerbohm, "Byron, the Poet: his life, told through his poetry", 3pm (telephone 0171-312 2463 for tickets).

TOMORROW: Victoria and Albert Museum: Frances Musker, "17th-century Dress and Textiles", 2pm.

Tate Gallery: Laurence Bradbury, "High Art from Lowly Subjects", 2.30pm.

National Portrait Gallery: Paul Webb, "Jessie Matthews", 3pm.

ARCHITECTURAL NOTES

CAROL WILLIS & DONALD FRIEDMAN

Empire State Building still astonishes

THE SKYSCRAPER Museum, housed in a landmark Art Deco skyscraper at the corner of Wall and Nassau Streets in New York, has recently mounted a new exhibition entitled "Building the Empire State". This 5,000 sq ft installation celebrates the design and construction of New York's signature skyscraper and includes photographs and film of the construction, architectural drawings, contracts, builders' records, financial reports, and many other artefacts which chronicle the rapid progress of the project from the decision to erect the tower, which was taken in August 1929, through to the opening ceremonies on 1 May 1931. The entire process didn't even take two years, thanks to an astonishing feat of organisation by the general contractors.

In the summer and fall of 1930, five new restaurants opened in New York. They were lunch counters with food described as "substantial" and "economical" and because Prohibition was still in force drinks were limited to milk, coffee, soft drinks, and near-beer. As is often the case, location compensated for menu limitations: the restaurants were located on the 3rd, 9th, 24th, 47th, and 64th floors of the construction site that was becoming the Empire State Building.

The builders recorded that

"not more than 15 per cent of

the men left the building during the lunch hour". This gave the men more time for lunch and the contractors a far

more productive work force.

Starrett Brothers and Eken approached the logistics of construction of the Empire State with a level of

organisation and detail that was unequalled in its time and still inspires awe today.

Six months after the first

structural columns were set

in April 1930, the steel frame

topped out on the 86th floor.

The fully enclosed building, including the mooring mast that stretched its height to the equivalent of 102 storeys, was finished within an astonishing 11 months, in March 1931.

The scale of the operations allowed the builders to introduce factory-like methods of efficiency. These included a sophisticated system of time-keeping, daily checking of unit costs of work performed, and an early system of "just-in-time" delivery that ensured that materials were ready for workers at that day's point of production. Concrete mixing was done on site in the newly constructed basement, and, most strikingly, the use of a small-gauge railroad on each floor during construction to allow materials to be moved from the hoists to where they were needed. The Empire State was completed ahead of schedule and under budget, for a mere \$25m (about \$245m in 1998 dollars).

As the world's tallest building for more than 40 years (until the World Trade Center twin towers were erected in the early 1970s), the Empire State Building is justly famous. Far less known is its stature as the paragon of efficient building construction and a record for speed of construction that remains unmatched even to this day. Carol Willis and Donald Friedman are the authors of *Building the Empire State* (Norton, £19.95).

Ayatollah almost gets checkmate in one

ONE OF the abiding illusions of Western popular thought is that, given time, the world will converge on our form of market society, or market economy, and share its values. Other cultures are to be seen as stages on the path to minor variants of our secular pluralism, much as Victorian anthropologists viewed the "primitive" societies that they studied. John Gray in his book *Fulse Dawn* traces this view to the Enlightenment belief that "all civilised people have the same basic values and want the same things"; beyond that is "barbarism".

Iran is perhaps the most difficult to fit into this Western myth. Here was the archetypal muscular "modernising" society under the Shah, complete with wide motorways, Western intelligence agencies, firmly entrenched arms dealers and a spectacularly small and rich ruling élite. But modernising capitalism did not collapse before Marxism (one descendant of the Enlightenment having over to another) or to any other of its offspring, but to Islamic revolution.

Some 20 years on, the headscarves were still dutifully going on in the plane as we came into land at Tehran. But the fact that the Organisation of Islamic Culture and Communications, an establishment body, was hosting six of us brought together by the Centre for the Study of Islam at Selby Oak in Birmingham, was some measure that things were opening up. President Khatami had been elected in 1989, bringing a period of political change. This change could not adequately be described as "liberalising" or "modernising" though it remained predominantly in a Muslim idiom and it was subtle.

We started with tea at Mullahi College next to the Majlis parliament. A twinkling, bespectacled Ayatollah Kashani, Friday preacher at Tehran's central mosque and a member of the powerful Council of Guardians, greeted us warmly and immediately told us what was on his mind. It was whether we had any views about the nature of the thousand year's reign on earth that Jesus and the Mahdi would inaugurate

when they returned. He was writing a book on the topic and had surprisingly discussed this with Cardinal Ratzinger - or Rock-Singer as the interpreter called him to great confusion at the Vatican. This may have been to a Muslim the theological equivalent of pawn to king's four in chess but to Christians - for whom the nature of the Second Coming is not the subject of regular debate - it almost proved checkmate in one. It spoke of the gap between the agendas of the two cultures.

Play recommended the next day with a formal opening ceremony of a Christian-Muslim seminar on social justice and economic "planners".

Following an admission from the Christian participants that a range of views was represented on our side, the leading representatives of Shi'ite Islam, Ayatollah Muhammad Khamenei and Ayatollah Muhammad Hadi Marefat, made it clear that not everyone on the Iranian side agreed with each other either. Nowhere was this more clear than on the issue of the role of women. All women present - and there were fewer than 10 - wore regulation black, a full dress covering the ankles, in contrast to the more relaxed style visible on the street, with headscarves worn well

At last! Theatre à la mode

No catwalk, no music, no models. Just a vocal warm-up. And this is a Prada fashion show? David Benedict on a first for British theatre

At the peak of Milan Menswear Fashion Week the tension is palpable. Everyone from the world's fashion press to the eccentrically dressed chief buyer for Bloomingdale's, is gathering for the launch of Prada's Miu Miu men.

The night before, their perfectly executed main show elicited audible sighs of pleasure. The collective sense of anticipation for this follow-up event is almost indecently visible. After braving my way through the fearlessly tight, wall-to-wall security, I end up where everyone else wants to be backstage.

With half-an-hour to go, no one wants performers being put off their stride by a journalist asking questions, so I'm trying to be unobtrusive while discreetly taking notes. Chief among them is: "What possessed me to commit such serious fashion crime?" My Nicole Farhi suit - bought in the sale, I hasten to add - fits like a glove but, horrors, it's midnight grey and everyone is in black.

The entire team trots back from the last-minute run-through wearing blue polythene over their shoes. The floor has been painted a shade of something lying between apple and Fifties bathroom green, and it must look pristine for the main event. Hairdressers make final adjustments, clothes are tweaked and then, 15 minutes before lift-off, Vicky Featherstone, the show's director, sidles up and says, "I'm sorry, but you'll have to go now, we're going to do a vocal warm-up." Pardon? This has to be a first. We're talking about a fashion show here.

Since when did models use their voices? I mean, 15 years ago when the model-turned-actress Andie MacDowell and her lovely hair graced the silver screen in *Greystoke*, her voice was so thin that she had to be dubbed by Glenn Close. But Featherstone is serious. This is no ordinary show. There's no catwalk, no music, no models. Miuccia Prada, the family business's guru, has thrown caution to the winds. She's abandoning tradition by launching her first ever Miu Miu menswear collection with a play, and a British one to boot. So much for the tiresomely common misconception that theatre is unfashionable.

Things don't get tressier than Prada. Whether you're Sigríður Weaver or Julianne Moore, both of whom wore Prada to the Oscars, or one of the thousands who sport or covet the trademark bags and backpacks, Prada is undeniably the chic label of choice.

In the months to come, Prada's art director, David Bradshaw, will



'Too Cold For Snow' at Milan Fashion Week - not a tableau vivant or a silly mime but a real, live play, directed by our very own Vicky Featherstone (below)



create and orchestrate media campaigns to display the variations of the six winter "lines" being heralded here. But on this chilly January night, representatives of five of those lines have become the costumes for the one-performance-only world premiere of *Too Cold for Snow*, by a young British playwright, Michael Wyne.

Of course, this is not the first time that theatre and fashion have collaborated. In 1941, Kurt Weill's musical *Lady in the Dark* was set in a fashion house. Designers like nothing better than the cachet of doing the frocks for plays, and even the Royal Opera House drafted in Giorgio Armani to provide costumes for a (dull) production of *Cost Fan*



Tutte. But that was merely an addition. Wyne and Featherstone, the artistic director of the new writing company Paines Plough, had a much more integrated idea in mind.

The clothes have been in the design stage for months, but the show itself was dreamt up and delivered in just seven weeks. Bradshaw's wife, Cathy, saw Wyne's play for the physical theatre company Frantic Assembly, *Sell-Out* - currently living up to its title on a British tour - and suggested he create a piece for Miu Miu. They then proposed it to Miuccia Prada, a woman known for trusting her own iconoclastic judgement, who gave them the go-ahead.

This decision is less surprising when you know that she not only has

Featherstone insists that the most exciting aspect of the deal, and the most daring from a commercial point of view, was the fact that at no point did anyone set them boundaries. This project was to be more than a case of hijacking art to dress up a trade show. "We were honestly asked to do whatever we wanted," says Featherstone.

Both she and Wyne drew their inspiration from drawings of the clothes - nobody saw the finished items until the day before the show. The easy, adolescent look suggested J.M. Barrie's Lost Boys in an urban Never Never Land. The fact that it was a winter collection added another element; it had to be short the one wanted to inflict an entire

evening of theatre on a potentially uninterested audience), and they needed to give equal weight to each outfit, hence the resultant ensemble nature of the writing.

With the first draft in place, they cast five actors under 30. Unbeknown to them, Rupert Penry-Jones - about to play Don Carlos for the RSC - had covered periods of unemployment strutting his stuff at previous Milan shows, but all of them were cast for their acting qualities rather than their looks. Indeed one of them, Kelly Reilly, wasn't even a man. When they took the job, all the cast knew about the assignment was that it was to be a week's work with one performance in Milan. Only afterwards did they dis-

cover exactly who was behind it. They certainly weren't prepared for the fringe benefits. After the dress rehearsal - the first time Prada saw what the company had created - Prada was so impressed that it broke its own rules. Freebies for the famous, Miuccia Prada believes, cheapen the image. However, the company was marched off to the main store and, in a re-gendered *Pretty Woman*, kitted out in presents: everything from underwear to overcoats, at an estimated cost of £1,500 a throw. Even Madonna doesn't get that treatment.

The backstage crew have had fewer than 24 hours to turn a state-of-the-art catwalk space into a theatre-in-the-round for fashion's top 25 movers and shakers. The walls and ceiling are in shades of dove and donkey gray, but "jaundiced" might just be the term to describe the paler of some of the journalists who have spent the past six days - only one more to go - scribbling style hints and tips and desperately summoning up ever more baroque descriptions of jackets, jerkins, suits, shirts and shoes.

"A friend of mine asked me what it was like," drawls a reporter from *Detail* magazine to his equally enervated colleague. "I asked him, 'What's your least favourite sport?' 'Hockey,' he said. 'Imagine going to 20 hockey games in a week...'" Consequently, when the play starts in darkness, with a voice-over proclaiming the death of love in a frozen world, you can feel the hacks' hiccups rising.

But as Wyne's engagingly benign and touching fairy tale unfolds, the atmosphere begins to thaw. Five minutes in, the gun-toting wannabe gangsters are shown to be increasingly ludicrous and jokily inept - and suddenly the laughter starts and everyone relaxes. By the end of the show, as love returns and violence disappears beneath falling snow - courtesy of the props man at La Scala - everyone applauds happily.

Alexander McQueen may be making his shows increasingly theatrical, but this collaboration is in a different league. Take the clothes away and the play still exists. The following morning, it makes the front page of every Italian paper, but even at post-show dinner at a local family restaurant the night before, think of the final scene in *Big Night* - Miuccia Prada was talking about developing the piece into a full-length play for London.

So it may not just be the clothes that you finally get to see. And, let's face it, a theatre ticket is a helluva lot cheaper than a Prada outfit.

ARTS DIARY

DAVID LISTER

SOME ACTORS are prepared to go to Yorkshire to get away from London audiences. The humorist Barry Fantoni, *Private Eye* veteran and playwright, has gone one better. He has opened his latest, *Modigliani, My Love* - the last hour and a half in the life of the artist's mistress - at Le Bouffon theatre in Paris, with some performances in French and some in English. "I just think the audiences in Paris are more responsive," he says. "The alternative and fringe theatre we see here in England tends not to be written with the accent on language and poetry. I like the cosmopolitan scene in Paris and my long-term plans now are to do what Peter Brook did and start a small theatre company there. I suppose it's because of my nationality." But surely your origins are Italian, Barry? "Yes, but a lot of Italians live in Paris." There's a profound logic in that, somewhere, but probably a Franco-Italian logic.

ASK THE Rabbi, say I, if you want a piece of film criticism. This week's protests by Messrs Menhin, Rostropovich and other distinguished musicians about the film *Hilary and Jackie* had the actress Emily Watson, who plays Jacqueline du Pré, close to despair: "despair, as she told me at the première, that so many people are slamming the movie without having seen it."

An incisive commentary comes from Rabbi Albert Friedlander, who ministered to du Pré in her last years (she converted to Judaism on marrying Daniel Barenboim). He says in the première programme, Inside Film: "Hilary wanted to pull Jackie down from the pedestal on

which she'd been placed, and there's probably some justice to that. In the end, it doesn't serve any purpose to have a St. Jacqueline who was perfect in every way, suffered bravely, went into darkness. That's not the reality... it's probably better we see the anguished life of a genius. I don't think in the end that Shaffer's play about Mozart (*Amadeus*) deprived Mozart of the adoration he received."

In fact, the film seemed more even-handed than has been suggested, and I said to Hilary du Pré at the party afterwards that she may have been unfairly vilified. By the way she grasped my hands for a full 90 seconds, I gathered she'd had a rough few weeks.

IF EMILY Watson does win a Golden Globe tomorrow, as she should for her brilliant performance, she should desist from thanking anyone in her acceptance speech. At Wednesday's première the film's director, producer and screenwriter all made speeches consisting largely of thanking people who were completely unknown to the bulk of the audience. Mass thanking from a public platform is a curse of the arts and mind-numbingly boring. It forms the staple acceptance speech at every awards ceremony I attend - enriched only once, when Vanessa Redgrave broke down in tears while thanking the stage carpenter. Anyone about to make an acceptance speech should heed the advice of Cerys Matthews, singer with Catatonia. Before receiving a Q award she was asked, backstage, whom she would be thanking. She replied: "People shouldn't get thanks for being in this business. They're lucky buggers."

IS PHILIP Gourevitch a matinée idol? That was the unlikely question heard repeatedly at *Salon* magazine's third annual book awards. Sepulchral girls and mercurial literati agents buried beneath chandeliers and paintings of 19th-century actors and aristocrats, plus a stained-glass representation of Richard III.

Journalists, digerati and publishing assistants labored into the night on websites and magazines, the Book Awards, at the Players Club, was more like Rennie Mackintosh's iMac. A standard-issue Web party, you'd find yourself in a white, rectilinear office filled with guys who know a thing or two about things called Perl and Excite. They'd be talking banner ads. There would be innumerable computer monitors, each screen ablaze with the company's website.

On the surface the gathering appeared a genteel book party but it was very much a New York New

Loud as a fairground but more fun

CLASSICAL

IVES, MENDELSSOHN,
PROKOFIEV / SFSO
BARBICAN, LONDON

ly young players. "Putnam's Camp" came next, a dazzling fantasy full of converging banalities, loud as a fairground but much more fun. (There were audible titters from the audience.) Then there was the "Housatonic at Stockbridge", shrouded in mist at either end but garishly lit at the centre.

The audience seemed a little unsure and were only too grateful to applaud the effortless virtuosity of Gill Shaham in Mendelssohn's perennially popular Violin Concerto. Shaham played with elegance, a full tone and sense of purpose, smiling appreciatively when the orchestra took the baton, and treading the few feet al-

located to him while he caressed the solo line. Tilson Thomas's accompaniment was full of lovely things and it seemed as if the two of them were having a ball. What most impressed was a mutual attentiveness, so essential in a performance that was above all flexible and imaginative.

Opinions differ as to whether Prokofiev's wartime Fifth Symphony is, or is not, about heroism; but few would question its high standing among the mid-century's musical masterpieces. Tilson Thomas made a great impact with the epic first movement, varying the pulse and driving hard at key climaxes, and the closing pages had a cinematic magnificence.

Prokofiev places a sardonic Scherzo second, which Tilson Thomas and his band invested with characteristic dynamism. Again, contrasts were played up for their maximum effect, though he seemed to sense



Michael Tilson Thomas: characteristic dynamism

menace beneath the frivolity. When it was over, he just stood there, head bowed, before cueing a sombre but powerful account of the Adagio. Nothing was left to chance, mainly

because Tilson Thomas had so much to say about the music. His LSO record was good, but last night's performance bordered on greatness.

ROB COWAN

At the birth of a cybermemoir

NEW YORK DIARY



ALISSA QUART

of a whole different order of literary credentialism. Of course, there were hints of *Salon*'s netness. There was a slide show of *Salon*'s book reviews photographed on a computer screen, and Michael Wolff, author of cybermemoir *Burn Rate*, took notes on the proceedings with his eyes.

The Book Awards were also a celebration of an influx of fresh funds into the magazine from undisclosed backers. Some buzzed as to who these new backers might be, but then lost interest, picking up another blue martini, wondering why autobiographical books seemed to succeed again this year and then trying to find some corner of their own lives that might soon be ripe for memoir.

Salon's fete for New York's high-end publishing world is of course part of the larger Net irony - that one of the most successful new media parties next door (*Atlas*, the young fogey who writes on Saul Bellow and his children's private schools, is a paragon

it was thought that the space age would bring "information" travelling at the speed of light, not better distribution of the printed word in its ancient *verso-reto* form. *Book Review*, which everyone assumed was dead, is now an arm of the highly successful on-line bookseller Amazon and barnesandnoble.com. The mirror image of these odd bedfellows - technology and the novel - were on the walls of Players. Portraits of last century's disreputable thespians hang next to their oh-so-respectable *rentier-class* patrons, levelling any distinction between the two.

Perhaps years from now, a club's walls will be filled with the work of author-snappers Marion Ettlinger, pictures of Web designers, cybermommies, venture capitalists, editors and novelists, hanging side by side. Future culture-makers may mistake industrialists for one and the same.

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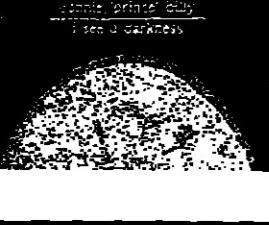
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THE WEEK IN REVIEW

BY FIONA STURGES

EXCELLENT GOOD OK POOR DEADLY

OVERVIEW	CRITICAL VIEW	OUR VIEW	ON VIEW
THE FILM HILARY AND JACKIE 	"Absorbing as it is, <i>Hilary and Jackie</i> feels a confused and slightly prurient film. While it seeks to celebrate one woman's extraordinary gift, its focus is the weird entanglements of her sex life. Neither is adequately elucidated," decided Anthony Quinn. "An impressive warts-and-all affair... a film of real commitment and intelligence," trilled <i>The Guardian</i> : <i>Time Out</i> reported that "this tragic, uplifting film transcends the limitations of the biopic to exult in Du Pré's artistry". "Far from the hachet job I had anticipated, though I was left pondering the point of the enterprise," noted <i>The Daily Mail</i> . "A major achievement," revealed <i>Uncut</i> .	Though Anand's account of Du Pré has difficulty deciding whether it is portraying a hero or a villain, it is an absorbing picture with fine performances by Watson and Griffiths.	<i>Hilary and Jackie</i> is out on general release, certificate 15. 121 minutes
THE PLAY STREET OF CROCODILES 	"Is that abselling or magic?" asked my 11-year-old assistant, as we watched this wondrously inventive and moving revival. We both readily agreed that the more perceptive answer would be 'magic', said Paul Taylor. "McBurney directs with his skilled, sensitive eye not on narrative coherence, but rather on the magic and emotional power both of the script and the capacities of theatre itself," wrote the <i>Financial Times</i> . "A mesmerising display of potent physical theatre," declared the <i>Daily Mail</i> , but <i>The Daily Telegraph</i> disagreed: "This revised production strikes me as being frustratingly unfocused, often to the point of incomprehensibility."	After a seven-year hiatus, Complicite's rendering of the strange, surreal world of Bruno Schulz proves more dazzling than ever under Simon McBurney's inspired direction.	<i>Street of Crocodiles</i> is at the Queen's Theatre, London W1 until 20 February. For bookings and enquiries call 0171-494 5040
THE EXHIBITION NEUROTIC REALISTS 	Charles Saatchi hosts the first instalment of a new wave of artists working in Britain – the "Neurotic Realists". Exhibitors include Paul Smith, Martin Maloney and Tomoko Takahashi.	"Saatchi likes art which is like ads. He also likes art which is violent, crass, yucky and perty. So maybe some artists, trying to turn themselves into a Saatchi type, have become worse than they might," grumbled Tom Lubbock. "Neurotic Realism" is more like a Boys' Own bash than the launch of a new movement," said <i>Time Out</i> , while <i>The Times</i> noted: "Saatchi's launching of 'Neurotic Realism' breaks with historical precedent. It seems to inaugurate a bolder, more open and partisan approach on his part." <i>The Sunday Telegraph</i> trumpeted: "Contemporary art gets off to a flying start with 'Neurotic Realism'."	Saatchi's stranglehold over the curation of modern British art goes on. Though 'Neurotic Realism' has some worthy exhibitors, they are destined to be eclipsed by their patron
THE ALBUM BONNIE PRINCE BILLY 	Will Oldham, brains behind Palace, Palace Brothers and Palace Songs, returns under a new pseudonym, Bonnie Prince Billy, with <i>I See a Darkness</i> .	"Oldham's most beguiling release yet... it has the authentic feel of songs that have been smoothed to perfection over centuries, like well-whittled sticks, or folk memories passed on at a mother's breast," revealed Andy Gill. "A quietly majestic album, it probably stands out as his best yet," cried <i>Time Out</i> , adding,	"Neurotic Realism" is at the Saatchi Gallery, NW8, until 4 April. For bookings and enquiries call 0171-624 8299
THE TV PROGRAMME STATION X 	Channel 4 reveals the code-breaking work of 10,000 crossword fanatics, chess champions and mathematicians at Bletchley Park (codename Station X) during the Second World War.	"As far as the actual mechanics of code-breaking and the Enigma machine went, the programme wimped out a little," remarked Robert Hanks. "You wondered if the producers respected the viewers' intelligence, particularly when the commentary referred to 'the Italian Fascist, Mussolini'." "A slow-moving hour," wrote <i>The Express</i> : "It's not as if the subject doesn't have potential – Robert Harris came up with a brilliantly vivid recreation of life at Bletchley Park in <i>Enigma</i> . Disappointingly, Station X has yet to do the same." "A fascinating new series," concluded <i>The Daily Mail</i> . "Riveting archive footage," observed <i>The Times</i> .	Station X unearthed interesting and informative archive footage. But in its efforts to make the technicalities of code-breaking penetrable, the programme underestimated the intelligence of its viewers.
			These exquisite compositions see Oldham moving further into the territory of the traditional folk song. <i>I See a Darkness</i> is surely the first contender in the race for Album of the Year.
			<i>I See a Darkness</i> (Domino) will be available in record shops from Monday
			You can see the second part of <i>Station X</i> on Sunday (C4, 9pm)
			To 13 February (0171-229 0706)

EXIT POLL

ANDREAS GURSKY:
PHOTOGRAPHS
1994-1998
SERPENTINE GALLERY
LONDONJAMES BOLTON
23, photography
assistant, London
They are absolutely
fantastic.
The images are
incredibly sharp and
detailed, and I
wonder how much is
real, or whether a
special camera was
used and the images manipulated. That
happens because so tiny was
particularly striking, as even though
they populate these beautiful
environments, they look locked in and
seem very lonely.LANCE LEVINE
60, retired, London
It's a good exhibition,
particularly for
people like me who
doesn't like abstract
art. The photographs
are very interesting,
for instance
landscapes that you
recognise at first, but when you
look closer.This is much more accessible than
the usual Serpentine exhibitions.Because it's more figurative, when I
have only 10 minutes to have a look I
can get more satisfaction.PATRICK LACEY
25, student, London
I was very interested
in how it is done.They are
photographs, but
made up as well.There is a touch of
technology. It is very
well done so it's hardto find any evidence of this, but you
know that the size couldn't fit in a
camera frame, or a particular shot
would distort.It's stunningly abstract, such as a
photograph of Times Square looking
like a series of blocks.CHERYL COHEN
49, photographer,
London
It's lovely work. Some
of it is very tranquil,
some of it is very
contested.Although there are
fantastic images, very
big, and determined
to have quite an effect, I think they are
more intentionally banal than
intentionally moving.

How death becomes them

WOODY ALLEN spoke for a lot of us when he quipped that he's not afraid of dying, he just doesn't want to be there when it happens.

It's a widely shared view that the best death would be an unconscious one (sudden or in your sleep) and that the whole frightening and embarrassing business should be surrounded by the discreet hospital curtains of silence and solitude.

From her experiences of working as the staff psychologist at a Parisian palliative-care unit for the terminally ill, Marie de Hennezel has come to the belief that, properly cared for, the dying can live with an intensity and deep access to themselves that put those of us who are dying more gradually to salutary

THEATRE
INTIMATE DEATH
THE GATE
LONDONshame. Her book about this subject, *Intimate Death*, now becomes the basis of a fine, thought-provoking stage adaptation by the director Mick Gordon.

It could be an uncomfortably voyeuristic experience watching a bunch of actors impersonate once-living people with Aids or cancer of the uterus or degenerative paralysis. All too easy to be moved and uplifted in a theatre, when you'd run a mile from visiting a real hospice. But the tact and sensitivity

with which the piece is directed and performed disarm cynicism. As with *The Man Who*, the analogous Peter Brook piece on neurological disorders, there is an admirable purity of focus on the full human being still intact (or potentially re-integratable) under the distortions of the condition. So, instead of performing the kind of virtuous illness-acting that wins Oscars, the talented cast tell us their individual stories directly and engagingly.

There is just one hospital bed, and as each patient comes on in turn, he or she kicks the brake on it and briskly shifts it to a completely different angle, one of the many little dignified touches by which the production guards against this seeming like a conveyor belt of the interchangeably terminal.

Playing Marie de Hennezel, the excellent Gillian Barge carries round with her an atmosphere of attentive, therapeutic peacefulness. You sense the kind of supersimplicity that can be achieved only by the sophisticated. De Hennezel must, one fancies, be more like this than as she comes across in the cloying prose of her book. We see her trying to divine the source of the psychological pain and terror in each patient and gently making recommendations as to how this might be relieved – by, say, being frank, for the first time in their lives, with their parents. Conversely,

as we witness in the case of a girl in a coma, it may be that the dying linger, waiting to be given permission to go by their stricken family. There are no easy solutions, it is implied, but there's a joy to be gained in fully living the mystery.

It struck me, watching these matters delicately developed in a theatre, that the philosophy of the hospice movement clashes intriguingly with the central tradition of Western drama. In tragedy, we want the hero to die in an annihilating burst of painful, isolating recognition.

It is no disrespect to palliative care units to say that one wouldn't desire it for King Lear.

PAUL TAYLOR



Living the mystery: Almeda Brown and Nicholas Tizzard

The raw and the undercooked

OPERA
STONE ANGELS
BLOOMSBURY THEATRE
LONDON

gongs, with murderous results.

Given the pre-existence of Golding's novel, it's a little predictable, but then we don't go to the opera to be surprised by the plot. We know before we get to the theatre that Carmen is going to die and that Figaro will get married. Opera is about developing, and sometimes resolving, conflict through music, and Baldwin's plot at least lays out some possibilities, rather needlessly underlined by back-projected footage of war planes

and bombs, as if to remind us what they look like.

The problem for a composer may lie in the very premise of the piece: what can you write that 30 still-developing voices can cope with? Well, contemporary pop music in all its numberless forms does a reasonably good job of juxtaposing savagery and tenderness, but those genres are not Barker's. His orchestra (*Lontano*, conducted by Udalea de la Martinez) is a quintet of flutes, clarinets, violin, cello and marimba, agreeably euphonious if hardly striking. All that he can find for his singers, though, are sing-song chants built around repetitive

little figures of no great force. In an attempt to introduce a hard edge, he has singers bang stones in time to the chants. At these points, the director/librettist Baldwin got some of the girls into formation for a little line-dancing, but it was all too reminiscent of a polite music-and-movement class, with no sense even of playground brutality, let alone primitive violence. Tina Bicic's costumes at least had the wit to show how the girls have transformed the ripped and torn shreds of their gym-slips into fashion statements, but nobody seems to have thought that, in circumstances like

these, their hair wouldn't look as if they had all been to the hairdresser the day before. If you're going for naturalism, you can't be half-hearted with it. The show's programme acknowledges financial assistance from no fewer than eight funding bodies. I'm sure none of the funding was lavish, because it never is, but that does suggest that the audience might expect a full and accomplished evening for its £10 admission. Instead, we got a mere 40 minutes of undercooked music theatre, with an orchestra of five and an amateur cast. Short measure by any standards.

NICK KIMBERLEY

PAUL BARKER labels his new opera, *Stone Angels*, a "children's opera", which in this case effectively means as much an opera with children as an opera for children.

Perhaps bearing in mind

WC Fields's dictum about

never acting with children,

Barker has cleared the stage

of adults and filled it with about

30 girls from the New London

Children's Choir. The libretto

(by Chris Baldwin, who also

directed) plays a variation on

Golding's Lord of the Flies. A

group of schoolchildren are

marooned on an island when

their plane crashes. As the

girls descend towards savagery they divide into rival

investigation team had just been turned away by the Serb authorities, she was still optimistic about seeing out the perpetrators and bringing them to justice. Wrench recognised that there was no need for glib remarks wishing her luck, and the interview ended.

Silence is not usually welcomed on the radio, but sometimes it works better than any amount of screaming headlines. That awkward pause on Tuesday was enough to get the full attention of those who'd been only half-listening. Whether it would make any difference in the long run is another matter. After all, what can individuals do when such dreadful things occur, except shake their heads and frown?

In *Viewing the Century* (Radio 3, Sunday) Seamus

interpreted as a rallying cry against the evil forces gathering in totalitarian Europe, and that Dylan Thomas's "Do not go gentle into that good night" was a glimmer of hope in the darkness cast by the Holocaust. We heard the voices of Sylvia Plath, TS Eliot and, of course, Heaney himself. In his final reading he demonstrated the sheer spellbinding power of rhythmic speech, and concluded that poetry provides a noble answer to the times.

"The written word and radio: they're the same thing," declared DJ Chris Evans. "We should never abuse them." These reassuring words were Evans' contribution to *The Future of Radio* (Radio 4, Thursday). Billed as an experimental feature, the programme drifted through the airwaves of past and present, with the hope of picking up suggestions for the next millennium. Superimposed over Michael Jackson came *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, only to be chased away by Arthur Askey and a posse of cool rap-DJs, then Beethoven, *Toad of Toad Hall* and Elvis Anything's Possible in Radio Wonderland! Everybody loves the wireless, it seems, but what they want is more and more choice, so that the entire world repertoire is available on request.The reality, of course, is different. Jo Wiley remembered being called into her parents' bedroom to listen to *Junior Choice*. She was four years old, Ed "Stewpot" Stewart was in charge of the post-bag, and she waited for her birthday dedication. It never came.

Heaney tackled the same question from the point of view of poets. "Poetry makes nothing happen," declared WH Auden in 1939, but Heaney argued that this was meant as a challenge, rather than a statement of fact. With the aid of superb archive recordings he showed that Auden's elegy "In memory of WB Yeats" could be

seen as a rallying cry against the evil forces gathering in totalitarian Europe, and that Dylan Thomas's "Do not go gentle into that good night" was a glimmer of hope in the darkness cast by the Holocaust. We heard the voices of Sylvia Plath, TS Eliot and, of course, Heaney himself. In his final reading he demonstrated the sheer spellbinding power of rhythmic speech, and concluded that poetry provides a noble answer to the times.

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“ONE OF THE BEST BRITISH FILMS OF THE DECADE”

THE SUNDAY TIMES

“IF WATSON & GRIFFITHS DON’T GET AN OSCAR NOMINATION, I’LL EAT MY OBOE”



“ONE OF THE BEST DRAMATIC PICTURES THIS DECADE”

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THE INDEPENDENT
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THE BOOKS INTERVIEW

A cutting edge in Sheffield

Lesley Glaister's suburban-Gothic novels delight and disturb all at once. Emma Hagestadt met her

It is a bit of mystery why Kate Atkinson sells more books than Lesley Glaister. Her novels cover much the same territory, but Glaister is one of those women writers whom readers have either come across by accident (and gone on to become devoted fans), or have just plain never heard of. A writer of addictive emotional thrillers – as if Ruth Rendell had got hold of an AS Byatt novel and stripped out the digressive bits – she ought to be packing out the shelves in the local bookshop.

Glaister lives in Sheffield and, like York-based Kate Atkinson, is more likely to be found stoking up in a Betty's tearoom than schmoozing in the Groucho. A resident of Eccleshall, one of the city's posher addresses (complete with a Café Rouge and Botanical Gardens), Glaister has a hill-climbing home that still bears the traces of South Yorkshire soot. Sitting at her cosy kitchen table, dressed in a nifty scarlet fleece, this petite 42-year-old, with clear eyes and uplifted nose, looks exceptionally cheery – as writers of the darker kind of fiction often do.

January is an important month for Lesley Glaister. Not only does she have a new novel, *Sheer Blue Bliss* (Bloomsbury, £15.99) and the paperback of her last book *Easy Peasy*, but Bloomsbury is republishing three of her best-known works: *Honour Thy Father*, *Digging to Australia* and *Partial Eclipse*. She's a little nervous at the prospect, but also thrilled: it must be every writer's dream to be so emphatically back in print. "I don't like the idea of other people knowing things about me that I don't know myself," she says of the reviewing process, but she does not mind the publicity razzmatazz – especially, she says, if the event involves a hotel with fluffy towels, and time to go shopping.

Glaister's territory is suburban Gothic, but unlike Angela Carter or Margaret Atwood, she's not interested in folkloric excursions into fairy tale forests or the thornier thickets of feminist irony. Her stories, couched in humour and social observation, are firmly rooted in the domestic and mundane. Babies are dropped on floors, young women locked in attics and fathers murdered in their beds, but they are usually polishing off a Pot Noodle in between last breaths. She says that, "I hate it when a writer mentions a meal but doesn't tell you what was eaten". Her characters, in contrast, are always well-fed, well-bathed and sleep best between cotton sheets.

An adopted Northerner, Glaister settled in Sheffield in her early twenties. Brought up in Suffolk, she's not that interested in talking about her childhood ("pretty normal") though she says that her last novel, *Easy Peasy*, was the closest she has come to autobiography. A voyage around a bad-tempered father, it tells how a daughter comes to terms with her parent's death and his secret past as a Japanese PoW.

"What interests me is memory and the tricks that it plays," says Glaister. Her stories are often told from the point of view of a child, but, intercut by the narrator's older self, it's a device that makes for a satisfyingly complete emotional landscape.



ANDREW BURTON

LESLEY GLAISTER, A BIOGRAPHY

Lesley Glaister was born in Wellingborough in 1956. Brought up in Suffolk, she dropped out of university to live with her future husband in a caravan. When their life of self-sufficiency failed to work out, the couple moved to Sheffield where he took a degree and she had babies. They split up, she met

someone else, gave birth to a third son, and started work on *Honour Thy Father*. In 1989 she took part in an Arvon Foundation school, where Hilary Mantel was so impressed by her work that she introduced her to her agent. Glaister's novel was sold to Secker, and won Betty Trask and Somerset Maugham awards.

Since then she has written *Trick or Treat* (1991), *Digging to Australia* (1992), *Limestone and Clay* (1993), *Partial Eclipse* (1994). *The Private Parts of Women* (1996) and *Easy Peasy* (1997). She lives in Sheffield and teaches writing at Sheffield Hallam University. Her eldest son has just left home.

hard to decide on a final version.

Sheer Blue Bliss is also told in flashback. Constance Benson is perhaps the author's most likeable old biddy so far. A reclusive portrait painter, diminutive Connie is in her eighties when she unexpectedly becomes the subject of a National Portrait Gallery retrospective. More used to a quick whip around with a scratchy fanny and a whisky at bedtime, she has to leave her Norfolk hidey hole for the lights of London. Her first clothes-shopping trip in 30 years is the comic highlight of the book. Dual narratives are not easy to pull off

– readers generally end up preferring one to another – but Glaister is a dab hand at moving between decades and emotional states without losing the plot. *The Private Parts of Women*, the story of a woman with a multiple-personality disorder, takes the problem one in Tricia's case three steps further: "I was 10 when I read Flora Rheta Schreiber's case study 'Sylvia,'" says Glaister. "I was fascinated by the idea of 16 different personalities being packed into one body with one face. I remember longing to suffer from the same problem." Becoming a writer was probably the next best thing.

There were no other writers in her family (dad was a customs officer, mum a housewife and singer) and Glaister says she always believed that writing was "something too special, too out of reach". One of her greatest pleasures since becoming an established novelist was to meet Margaret Drabble, whose novel *The Millstone* (along with Dickens, horror novels and cereal packets) was her preferred girlhood reading.

Not until her early thirties, when Glaister was into her second marriage and pregnant with her third son, Leo, did she begin work on *Honour Thy Father*, while the baby napped. The writing came effortlessly – she calls it "dreaming on to paper". Glaister is convinced that although childbirth left her "in a peculiar state of mind", it also lent her a "heightened perceptiveness". (She's almost tempted to get pregnant again.) The novel walked away with both a Somerset Maugham and a Betty Trask award.

Not afraid of the odd pram, or Fisher Price garage, in the hallway, Glaister maintains that "domesticity and creativity" are the perfect match. "You have to be prepared to live in chaos," she says, "but living in a pigsty is OK if you're achieving something."

Young families and teenagers often feature in the more disturbing of Glaister's novels. "There are so many strange things going on in families, particularly the love/hate you can feel for the same person," she explains. Whether it's post-natal husbands and wives, mothers and babies, or parasitic siblings, her technique is to exaggerate the irritation and disgust we all feel for each other. In the brilliant *Digging to Australia*, she even gives the adolescent heroine (just into sanitary towels, just out of *Blue Peter*) a naturist grandfather.

Glaister may have had to discard a couple of husbands en route, but for the first time in her writing career she has her own study. There's room enough to do yoga headstands – "it gets the blood moving" – and privacy enough to speak her ideas out loud. Sheffield's Botanical Gardens are a good place for that, too.

The gardens certainly helped with *Sheer Blue Bliss*. One of the central characters is Patrick Mount, an eccentric visionary in 1940s Derbyshire who develops an arcane philosophy based on the pleasure-enhancing properties of plants. The book drips deliciously with wet lettuces, rhubarb leaves and potent sex: "I was interested in the idea of a guru without followers."

In the past, Glaister says she was at the whim of ideas blasting through her. *Sheer Blue Bliss* came from an altogether different place ... I poured myself into the story rather than the other way around." She sounds unusually satisfied with the book, pleased that she had more time to think about the actual writing. "It's a lovely feeling doing anything that comes out the way you planned, whether cooking a meal or painting a room."

Lesley Glaister has every reason to look cheerful. Her novels may flirt with the macabre, but the only thing that goes bump in the night is her partner of the last two years, the Orcadian poet Robert Greig. I didn't get to meet him, but I suspect he has a beard.

COVER STORIES



WITH BILL Clinton addressing the State of the Union, America's commentators are hard at work addressing the state of his union. Many proposals for books on Hillary are said to be doing the rounds of New York publishers. Last week Carl Bernstein, who came to fame 25 years ago in a rather different presidential scandal, signed with Knopf for a "major biography", inevitably dubbed "All the President's Women". This week, Gail Sheehy contracted with Random House for a study that will concentrate on "Mrs Clinton's marriage and relationship with the President".

MEANWHILE, LUCIANNE Goldberg, the so-called literary agent (she once handled Kitty Kelley – surely a marriage made in heaven), who started it all by writing up Linda Tripp, has been telling the *New York Press* that she has "the most boring job in the world", because authors are nothing but "a bunch of crybabies". She says "I enjoy the scandal book, but it's a bore".

TREVOR BAYLIS, the inventor of the clockwork robot who was given an OBE in the New Year Honours, is hard at work on his autobiography for Headline. The former swimming champion and stunt man who aims to bring low-cost technology to the poor corners of the world hopes to set up "an Academy of Invention" in order that good ideas may be turned into successful products.

THE YEAR is not yet a month old and already publishers are rushing to scribble fat cheques. This time the recipient is twenty-something Jenny Colgan, stand-up comic, who's been paid more than £200,000 by HarperCollins for *Amanda's Wedding*, a "rite of passage novel" which asks why we're so hell-bent on courtship.

ON TUESDAY, as dinner at Whitbread's brewery and TV viewers wait to see if Ted Hughes will win the Whitbread Book of the Year for a second time, the late poet will be celebrated at an evening organised by his friend Graham Fawcett, translator and broadcaster. The event takes place at Pitshanger Manor, Ealing and tickets cost £5 (phone 0181 567 1227). Fawcett hopes those attending will bring a favourite poem and some memories.

THE LITERATOR

Wait for a comeback by the Napoleon of Notting Hill

Roy Hattersley argues that Peter Mandelson's slapdash, sensational and partisan biographer has rushed to judgment a full decade too early

SOONER OR later Peter Mandelson will return to the Cabinet. Assuming the Labour Party wins the next general election, his talents will guarantee that he enjoys a long and eventful ministerial career. Then, let us say about 2010, it will be possible to write a serious biography about a politician whose achievements justify 300 pages. Paul Routledge has attempted that task a full decade too early. The most interesting aspect of *Mandy* – since it tells us really little about its subject which was not already known – is why the author rushed so prematurely into print.

Routledge himself will deny that his aim was to damage Peter Mandelson as his contribution to the arcane battle which we are told is raging within the Labour leadership. But he has chosen to emphasise shortcomings and trip lightly over undoubted virtues. As a result, he often paints a distorted picture and

obscures rather than reveals the more interesting aspects of Mandelson's rise to fame and notoriety. Quite properly, Mandelson's appointment in 1985 as Labour's director of communications is identified as the time at which he became a major political figure. But the story of how he got the job is virtually submerged under what Routledge clearly believes is an exposure of intrigue. It may well be that Mandelson volunteered to work in the Brecon and Radnor by-election in the hope of improving his chances of getting the job. But that, wholly unprehensible aspect of his appointment is far less interesting than the fact that, initially, Neil Kinnock favoured another candidate.

Kinnock changed his mind before the interview. But when Mandelson arrived, there was certainly no majority for him on the National Executive. He performed with such

brilliance that, unusually for a political appointment, he carried the day on the merits of his presentation. He was then a London Weekend Television producer and certainly thought the new job was a step up. But there was a second reason for the move which Routledge has overlooked. Mandelson worked for Albert Booth, the shadow Transport Minister, and he found Booth's deputy an uncongenial comrade. The deputy was a young man called John Prescott.

The omissions from *Mandy* are compounded by simple errors. Tony Blair did not vacillate about whether to stand for Deputy Leader of the Labour Party in 1982. He decided – on my advice among others – that deputies rarely become leaders and that he should not prejudice his chance of succeeding John Smith. John Smith's antipathy to Mandelson was in no way associated with

the dead leader's distaste for Julie Hall, partner and eventual wife of Mandelson's deputy. Certainly, Smith never forgave Hall for stand-

ing with her television crew outside the hospital in which he was being treated for his first heart attack, "waiting for him to die". But Smith's complaint against Mandelson was the same as mine. He was too interested in presentation and too little concerned with politics.

I was never Peter Mandelson's "mentor" – an idea he may find as embarrassing as I do. Whichever of us is most offended, we will both agree that it is simply an invention. It may be that errors are the result of this book being written in a hurry. It certainly bears all the marks of speedy and slapdash production. The final paragraph begins with a sentence of pure gibberish: "I always think of him as decent, solid and loyal."

The speed with which the book was produced probably provides the clue to its premature appearance. Either publisher or author believed that *Mandy* (a truly terrible

title) would sell because it revealed damaging facts about Mandelson's private life – particularly the help he received from Geoffrey Robinson when he bought his house in Notting Hill. That is a rotten reason for writing a biography, not because it damages the subject but because it obscures less sensational but more important facts.

The result is that Routledge hardly mentions the reasons why Mandelson is so unpopular within the party. His crimes are ideological. He stands for a position which even few "modernisers" of New Labour share. His social pretensions are held against him because they are seen as a feature of his flight from anything that resembles socialism.

I have no idea how Mandelson behaved in the days after John Smith's death. Perhaps he was campaigning for Tony Blair within hours – although a senior member of the

Labour Party told me on the morning of the funeral that Mandelson had canvassed him on behalf of Gordon Brown earlier that week. I do know that after Blair became leader, Mandelson thought it right to exalt his new hero by attempting to diminish his predecessor. Looking back, that now seems the paradigm of his behaviour: shifting, but maniacally ruthless, loyalty to his chosen champion. A biography that does not deal with that aspect of his character is barely worth reading.

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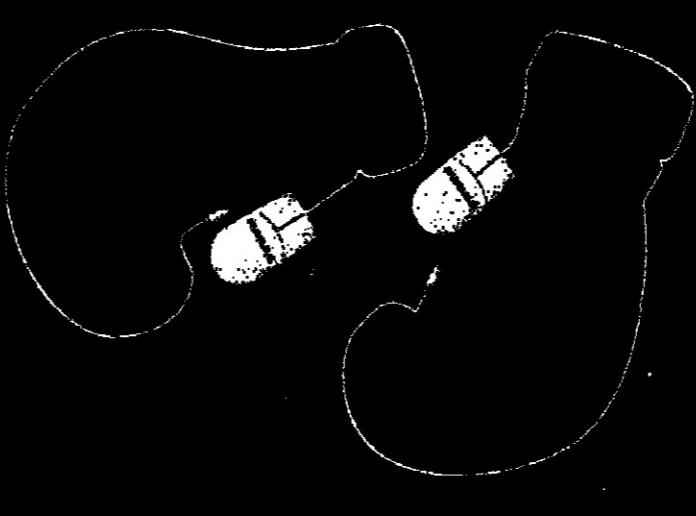
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Bitter fruit of freedom

Fergal Keane disputes a self-serving apologia from the last Afrikaner president



The Last Trek:
a new beginning
by F W De Klerk
Macmillan, £20. 432pp



Waiting for a home in the new South Africa: Cynthia Mthibe in Fergal Keane's *Panorama* film this week

Some months ago, I interviewed F W De Klerk as part of a radio series on people who had resigned from their jobs. He was visiting London with the new love of his life, Elita Georgiadis, the former wife of a Greek shipping magnate. I had not seen him since that remarkable day in Pretoria nearly five years before, when he was sworn in as South Africa's deputy president. Then he had been the smiling figure standing by Nelson Mandela's side as the world applauded the miracle of South Africa's democratic transition. The country had a government of national unity and De Klerk was assured a prominent place at the top table. He might have been forgiven for thinking that South Africa had really put the bitterness and discord of the apartheid era to one side.

But ahead lay disillusionment and personal crisis, and this autobiography reveals, a great deal of humiliation at the hands of Mandela. The De Klerk team was, as ever, affable and courteous. He is one of the least arrogant of politicians, a far cry from the men of granite who preceded him as Afrikaner leaders.

In the interview, however, he appeared bitter and defensive. He spoke about the deterioration of his relationship with Mandela and the ignominy which he and the National Party had suffered at the hands of the ANC. By now he had resigned from politics and the Nationalists were in sharp decline. I reminded him that he had once told me at a drinks party in Cape Town of his amazement at Mandela's "fundamental lack of bitterness". Did he still believe that? I wondered? His response was somewhat equivocal. The book, he promised, would tell the full story. Does it? Yes and no. As an account of a tormented relationship, *The Last Trek* spares us none of the author's hurt and anger. The mythology, so necessary dur-

ing the transition, of black and white leaders moving forward together is exploded here. Those of us who lived through the dramatic changes were of course aware of tension between the two men. The issue of violence had provoked several angry public exchanges. But what the book reveals is a relationship that had degenerated into a personal feud soon after Mandela's release from prison.

There are any number of anecdotes about the arguments between the two, which continued up to the National Party's withdrawal from the Government of National Unity in 1997. According to De Klerk's version, Mandela was capable of extraordinary pettiness. Consider what happened when De Klerk wanted to refurbish the official residence he had been given after the 1994 elections. The President of the Republic insisted on accompanying De Klerk and the architect to satisfy himself that the refurbishment was necessary. The incident suggests a great deal more bitterness than we previously suspected.

The root of Mandela's bitterness was not his long imprisonment by the Nationalists. Nor was it the multiple outrages which apartheid heaped on his people. The anger was rooted firmly in the violence of the present. Mandela believed that De Klerk was standing back while his security forces were deliberately fomenting violence in the black townships.

He never seemed to be entirely clear about why De Klerk would want to do this.

On occasion, he would suggest that black lives did not matter to De Klerk. At other times he would claim that the Nationalists and security forces were determined to prevent, by any means, the ANC coming to power. They were bitter words but, in the context of the violence and the Nationalists' past record, hardly surprising. Given what we now know of the activities of the police and army, Mandela's claims of a Third Force bent on destabilising the transition seem entirely reasonable.

That is not to say that the ANC was entirely without blame. The organisation could be arrogant, intolerant and woefully irresponsible. It encouraged township youth to form self-defence units which rapidly ran out of control; some of its leaders believed it really would be possible to overthrow the white state with revolutionary power. The result of that thinking was invariably dead black bodies.

But it was De Klerk's security forces and their allies in Chief Buthelezi's Inkatha who did most to turn the townships into terror zones in the early Nineties. On the issue of violence, De Klerk's book is singularly self-serving and disingenuous. He admits attending a cabinet meeting in the Eighties at which a Third Force was discussed: a body which "must have a well-trained ability to wipe out terrorists. It must be prepared to be unpopular and even feared."

De Klerk claims to have completely forgotten about this discussion until it was brought to his attention 11 years later by

investigators from South Africa's Truth Commission. The overall impression is of a man gripped by twin fears: on one hand, he feared the security establishment might try to overthrow him and prevent the transition; on the other, he feared that the process would collapse and that he would be faced with millions of angry blacks demanding their freedom.

De Klerk needed the security forces. They were his insurance policy against the ANC. And this, it could be argued, gave him a powerful reason not to clamp down on their murderous activities. Mandela understood this, too, and he never forgave De Klerk.

Braided through this book's pages is De Klerk's passionate conviction that he is a man who has never been given the credit that is due. Repeatedly we are told that it was the National Party which created apartheid but which also dismantled it. This latter claim is presented as if the death of apartheid had been the consequence of a moral conversion. It was not. There were some who suffered qualms of conscience, but what changed De Klerk's mind was not the immorality of the system but its unworkability. He deserves credit for his pragmatism and courage - he was one of the bravest politicians of our time. But to claim credit for killing of apartheid is ludicrous. That distinction belongs to the untold millions who suffered under that odious system. It belongs to Biko and Sisulu and Kathrada and First and Slovo - and Mandela.

INSPIRATIONS

NOVELIST JOSEPH O'CONNOR

The music

Faccioli, Bessie Smith, Muddy Waters, The Clash, Bob Dylan, Little Richard, Eben González. Anything sung by Tito Shinpa or Andreas Scholl. I love the compression and economy of Irish and English traditional songs, and find it fascinating to hear how long before modernist writers discovered streams-of-consciousness, interior monologue and shifting points-of-view, these narrative strategies were being used by the anonymous composers of folk songs. A friend of mine always says that any novel that can't be sung as a three minute ballad is probably no good. I think he may well be right.

The play

I love the sparseness and bravery of Beckett's plays, and I have a great affection for King Lear because I studied it for two years in school. But the most powerful experience I've had in the theatre was the 1993 Royal Court production of Brian Friel's masterpiece, *Farewell, starring Donal McCann in the title role. I still get the shivers when I remember it.*

The place

My two favourite places could not be more different, though I am equally at home in either. One is noisy Manhattan, the other is silent Connemara in the west of Ireland. I find the beauty of both breathtaking.



The film

The most inspirational film I've ever seen is also the first film I saw in a cinema - *War and Peace* by King Vidor and Mario Soldati, starring Audrey Hepburn and Henry Fonda. I was six. I weigh every film I've seen since against that one.

The artwork

Miro, Frank Stella and Stanley Spencer are some of my favourites. I also like the work of John Keane and Peter Howson. Though I am not religious, I love the scrupulousness and clarity of medieval religious icon painting, full of lapis lazuli blue and heavy with gilt. Catholic Gilt, I suppose you could call it.

Joseph O'Connor's novel *The Salesman* is published by Vintage (£5.99)

BESTSELLERS

After one week in the best-seller list, Nigella Lawson's *How to Eat* has dropped out, her succulent prose replaced by two much more prosaic diet and health books: Rosemary Conley's *Low Fat Cookbook* and the more robust *Fighting Fit, Fighting Fit*, linked to the BBC series of the same name. But hedonists

are holding their own against this annual reaction to the season of gluttony. Rick Stein's *Seafood Odyssey* has also entered the list and Nigel Slater's *Real Food* returns. In fiction, the first appearance of Bret Easton Ellis's widely-panned, name-dropping fantasy about terrorist supermodels, *Glamorama*, tends to

confirm the old adage that authors should never read their reviews but simply measure them.

Compiled from data supplied on sales over seven days ending 18 January 1999
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ORIGINAL FICTION

TITLE	AUTHOR/PUBLISHER	WEEKLY SALES	PRICE
1 (1) <i>Tiffany's Secret Diary</i>	Kate Lock (BBC)	2,361	£4.99
2 (1) <i>City Girl</i>	Patricia Scanlan (Bantam)	2,052	£5.99
3 (3) <i>Tom Clancy's Powerplays ...</i>	Tom Clancy (Penguin)	2,046	£5.99
4 (3) <i>Ramsey's 5: Under Western ...</i>	Christian Jacq (Simon & Schuster)	1,376	£9.99
5 (2) <i>Churchill's People</i>	Mary Jane Staples (Corgi)	1,344	£5.99
6 (8) <i>Archangel</i>	Robert Harris (Hutchinson)	1,118	£16.99
7 (7) <i>Charlotte Gray</i>	Sebastian Faulks (Hutchinson)	1,067	£16.99
8 (5) <i>This United State</i>	Colin Forbes (Macmillan)	1,039	£16.99
9 (9) <i>Carpe Jugulum</i>	Terry Pratchett (Doubleday)	924	£16.99
10 (-) <i>Glamorama</i>	Bret Easton Ellis (Picador)	921	£16

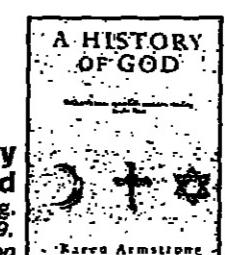
ORIGINAL NON-FICTION

TITLE	AUTHOR/PUBLISHER	WEEKLY SALES	PRICE
1 (1) <i>Delia's How to Cook, Book 1</i>	Delia Smith (BBC)	4,433	£16.99
2 (5) <i>Little Book of Feng Shui</i>	Lillian Too (Element)	3,924	£1.99
3 (3) <i>Men are From Mars ...</i>	John Gray (Thorsons)	3,863	£8.99
4 (2) <i>Little Book of Calm</i>	Paul Wilson (Penguin)	2,863	£1.99
5 (4) <i>Notes From a Big Country</i>	Bill Bryson (Doubleday)	2,484	£16.99
6 (-) <i>Fighting Fat, Fighting Fit</i>	Janette Marshall (BBC)	1,847	£4.99
7 (-) <i>Rick Stein's Seafood Odyssey</i>	Rick Stein (BBC)	1,810	£18.99
8 (-) <i>Low Fat Cookbook</i>	Rosemary Conley (Century)	1,745	£16.99
9 (6) <i>Birthday Letters</i>	Ted Hughes (Faber)	1,378	£14.99
10 (-) <i>Real Food</i>	Nigel Slater (Fourth Estate)	1,064	£18.99

الجمعة 15

PAPERBACKS

BY EMMA HAGESTADT AND CHRISTOPHER HIRST



A History of God
by Karen Armstrong
Vintage, £9.99.
511pp

IT WASN'T until Armstrong, a former nun, let her "believe in God slip away" that she was able to write this book. It contrasts the evolving concept of the supreme being from the viewpoints of Jewish, Christian and Muslim faith. This throws up a wealth of nuggets: the doctrine that Jesus is God was "not finalised until the fourth century", self-castration, as performed by third-century theologian Origen, "was common in late antiquity". Finally, she praises "the growing intolerance of inadequate images of the Absolute". (The Pope said exactly the same last week.)



Could it be Magic?
by Paul Magrs
Vintage, £6.99.
328pp

PAUL MAGRS's ambitious third novel tells what happens when the Christmas spirit (and several Bodddington six-packs) get to work on the more susceptible residents of a run-down council estate in Co. Durham. Penny, an unemployed schoolteacher, starts an affair with a club-footed body builder; her flatmate Andy sleeps with a man plastered in animal tattoos; and her mother (a transvestite called Liz) collapses face down in the snow. A smart and funny writer, Magrs creates a magical-realist North East that is more engaging than it sounds.



Katherine's Wheel
by Rebecca Gregson
Pocket Books,
£6.99. 373pp

OLD UNIVERSITY friends Beth, Katherine, Johnny and Patrick have always planned to see in the millennium together, but when the moment arrives, the class of 1982 don't have much to celebrate. Katherine and Johnny's marriage has fallen apart, Beth loves her restored Cornish farmhouse but not her solicitor husband, and American-based Patrick is depressed and sexually available. An enthralling and pleasantly folksy first novel, twinkling with wine glasses and wind-chimes. Rebecca Gregson explores what it is to be 35 and still not have got your life together.



Son of the Morning Star
by Evan S Connell
Pimlico, £12.50.
441pp

IMPRESSIONISTIC, YET packed with detail, Connell's account of the Battle of the Little Big Horn is irresistible history. Zigzagging across time, the writer explores every aspect of this pivotal event in which 50 or 60 troopers took on 20,000 braves. Connell reveals that the sordid, violent army life was a million miles away from *Show Wore a Yellow Ribbon*. On the Indian side, he notes how each tribe had a distinctive style of scalping and what Sitting Bull said when trying out a telephone ("Hello, hello, you bet, you bet"). But the book is dominated by the flamboyant figure of Gen George Custer.



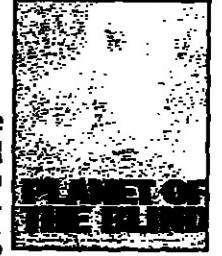
Undiscovered Country
by Christina Koning
Penguin, £6.99.
309pp

A SULTRY account of Antonia (Tony), an English tomboy growing up in the Venezuela of the Fifties. To the accompaniment of Sinatra and Ellington, her mother Vivienne maintains a brittle facade of ceaseless expat socialising, while her American stepfather Jack scuttles off to his mistress. While her parents are distracted by hedonism, Tony explores the darker side of Caribbean life. But soon this delicately balanced artifice falls out of killer with tragic consequences. On the eve of her return to England, Tony coolly observes how Jack's funeral turns into yet another party.



The Boy
by Naeem Murr
Fourth Estate,
£6.99. 217pp

NAEEM MURR's chilling first novel is set among the backstreets of Battersea and around Victoria Station. Discovering his dead daughter's diary, Sean is determined to track down the beautiful blonde boy to whom he was once a foster father. En route, he comes across others (rent boys and social workers) who have also been seduced by the boy's angelic profile, cool green eyes and vampiric fascination with blood. A dark and menacing read, with a suitably creepy denouement; though occasionally Murr's more baroque imaginings threaten to break free from his carefully crafted prose.



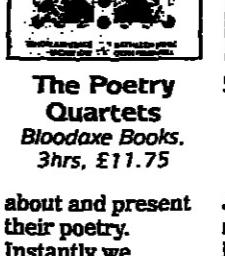
Planet of the Blind
by Stephen Kuusisto
Faber, £6.99.
194pp

BLIND, EXCEPT for a few blurred fragments of sight, Kuusisto has written one of the richest works of observation in the English language. Every page pulsates with dazzling perceptions. At first, he simply ignored his disability. Though his "eyes are engines of apparition", Kuusisto cycled regularly for 20 years. Amid his wonderful language, it is jarringly to read of repeated traumas: drink, drugs, bullying, anorexia. Only in his thirties, when he becomes the "human appendix" of a guide dog called Corky, does Kuusisto come to terms with his blindness. Through this masterpiece, he enables us all to see.



The Poetry Quartet
Bloodaxe Books,
3hrs, £11.75

A NEW spoken-word series published by Bloodaxe Books is perfectly timed for the current debate as to which of our poets is best suited to be Poet Laureate. In an update of its Sixties LP compilations, *The Poet Speaks*, the British Council is once again making definitive archive recordings of our leading poets. Each Poetry Quartet has two cassettes, on which four poets each have 30 minutes to talk about and present their poetry. Instantly we appreciate age, accent, attitude in a way that is impossible if we merely see the poems on the page. Three issued so far; more to come.



Show Business
by Mark Radcliffe
Hodder, 2hrs,
£8.99

JUST AS revealing as hearing poetry read by the poet is hearing autobiography read by the author. In *Show Business: diary of a rock and roll nobody*, Radio 1 DJ Mark Radcliffe tells the story of the pop star he never remotely was but spent a decade or so imitating ("I dreamed

Wanted: for murder most foul

COUNTRY MATTERS

DUFF HART-DAVIS

It was all too easy to see the line that the fox had taken when making off with its prey. A trail of white feathers, gradually petering out, revealed that our prize pullet had been carried away across the bottom of the lowest field. The raider had also killed her brother, a splendid cockerel, but, being unable to carry two bodies at once, had left his decapitated corpse in the farmyard.

Where were you, alpacas? When we bought Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, we were told they could be useful in driving off foxes, and several times in the past few months they have shown themselves to be conscientious sentries. They have advanced purposefully on foxes trying to launch daylight attacks, sometimes chasing them in fine style, but on that fateful morning they must have been high up under the wood, and it seems that the killer sneaked in undetected from below.

Murder in the farmyard always comes as a shock; but this raid was more than usually upsetting because the victims were the offspring of an exceptionally dedicated and skilful mother. She, a fury-faced Bramah, hatched three chicks in November - the worst time of the year to start a new family - and deflated heavy odds to bring them up.

Cold, wet, cats, rats - she beat every hazard and reared a most handsome trio. The two pullets had almost reached maturity and were on the point of laying when an intruder at last got through our defences. For a couple of days the sole survivor hung around looking bewildered, before attacking herself to the rest of the flock.

Such minor tragedies blight our winter days. Yet there are also gains. At this time of year when well-to-do friends disappear to Barbados or the Seychelles those left behind on the land have to make the most of small-scale triumphs to raise their morale.

We got one such boost within a week of losing the chickens. Needing more hay, we drove off to fetch a load from the excellent Smith brothers who, as usual, managed to outwit the foul weather that persisted for most of the summer, and made a good crop late in July.



Back at our own hay-store, I shifted bales of straw so that we could stack our new intake satisfactorily. As we began to unload, I noticed Jemima, our young Labrador, lying in Sphinx-like attitude in the middle of the yard, with an expression of huge self-satisfaction on her face. Closer inspection revealed that inside her mouth, intact, was an egg. We congratulated her, removed it and gave her a reward; but within a minute she was back with another treasure.

This time, using her like an outside ferret, I went down on my knees and shoved my head along a tunnel created by removing a straw bale. There lay a secret nest containing 27 eggs, and beyond it, in the far recesses of the stack, another clutch of about a dozen, old enough - by the look of them - to excite a Chinese chef.

So this was what all the cackling had been about. For days we had heard and seen a hen emerging from the hales amid loud screeches, but repeated searches had failed to

detect any hideaway, and we had started to write her off as an hysterical attention-seeker. Now we cleared the outer nest and put the eggs in a sinkful of water. None floated - if they do, it is a sure sign they are addled - and we have been

enjoying bright-yellow scrambled eggs and omelettes ever since.

Another minor victory was to catch two rats simultaneously in the same spring-trap - a fluke that is not likely to recur. Because they were only half-grown, and fairly light, it

needed their combined weight to trip the lever.

With the sky black and rain falling in torrents, it is easy to feel that you are under continuous assault - not only from the weather, but also from creatures great and small. It

seems that if you drop your guard for a moment, disaster will strike.

So it was, when we let the sheep into the orchard to eat off the long grass. Too late, I noticed that they had knocked away a piece of wood that I had laid across the entrance of one of the beehives to act as a mouse-guard.

Heaps of debris on the flight-board showed that mice had got in and made themselves a comfortable nest among the combs in the brood-chamber. How they escaped being stung to death, I cannot make out, but I fear that their invasion has only begun for the colony.

Meanwhile, rabbits have excavated a burrow beneath the hive, badgers have forced their way under the orchard fence, and moles are running smak beneath the fields. In the vegetable patch unseen agents of destruction have stripped a whole row of parsley and eaten out the tops of the carrots.

Monet's

NATURE NOTES

AFTER SUCH torrents of rain it seems extraordinary that ground-water levels are still not as high as the authorities would like. The weather has been doing its best to top up underground aquifers, but in many areas there is still some way to go.

Experts estimate that probably only a fifth of all rainfall is "effective" - that is, it reaches subterranean storage areas. The rest evaporates, is taken up by plants and trees, or

runs off down rivers. After prolonged dry spells, such as we have had in recent years, the top layer of soil must become saturated before moisture can start dropping down into the lower strata.

Then gradually water sinks into porous rock such as sandstone, whose individual grains are circular, or into the cracks and fissures of hard rock like limestone. Depending on depth, and on the density of the stratum, the process can take

from weeks to tens of thousands of years.

The amount of water stored beneath Britain is immense. The main chalk aquifer alone stretches from the Dorset coast all the way to North Yorkshire. It has been calculated that, in the chalk and sandstone, the top 20 metres alone contain about 20 times as much water as all the surface reservoirs in the kingdom put together.

DUFF HART-DAVIS

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Books
INTERNATIONAL Amateur Poetry COMPETITION
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The International Library of Poetry has just announced that it is sponsoring an International Amateur Poetry Competition to include the United Kingdom and Ireland. There will be eight competitions this year open to all amateur poets. Entry to the competitions is free and there is no purchase requirement to win one of 70 prizes, including a £1,000.00 Grand Prize.

How to Win

All the poems entered into the competition will be judged on originality, use of language, poetic style, creativity, and artistic expression. In addition to the £1,000.00 Grand Prize, ten Second Prizes of £50.00 each, and 59 Third Prize gifts with a £28.00 value will also be awarded.

All 70 prize winners will be featured in a beautiful, hardbound anthology to be published at the conclusion of the competition.

And what's more, non-winners may guarantee publication of their poem in this beautiful edition through their purchase of a copy (a pre-publication discount will be available). Every poem remains the exclusive property of its author. Anthologies published by the organisation include: *A Lasting Calm, Awaken to a Dream, and Jewels of the Imagination*, among others.

World's Largest Poetry Organisation

The International Library of Poetry was founded in the United States in 1987 to promote the work and achievements of contemporary poets. The organization publishes poetry and sponsors competitions around the world. In recent years they have awarded prize money to more than 5,000 poets in over 60 countries. In the next 12 months they will award £12,000.00 in cash prizes.

"It's always exciting to discover new talent," stated Howard Ely, Managing Editor of The International Library of Poetry. "We're especially interested in poems from new or unpublished poets. urge everyone who is interested in poetry to enter this competition."

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3. The poem must be no more than 20 lines.
4. 70 prizes per competition
are awarded including a Grand Prize of £1,000.
5. Closing date for entries is the last day of this month.

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Painters may find inspiration in Giverny but should gardeners take it as a compelling model? There is little to sustain interest between the death of dahlias and the advent of tulips.

Barrie Smith/French Picture Library

Giverny: it's not a bed of roses

Monet's tranquil garden was born out of conflict and hard labour. Create a gentler, English version instead, advises Anna Pavord

My garden is my most beautiful masterpiece," said the painter Claude Monet towards the end of his life. With that one sentence, he dismissed all the shimmering canvases of water-lilies, bridges, weeping willows and rivers, currently on show at the Royal Academy of Arts in London.

Together with his large family, Monet moved into Giverny, his Normandy home, in 1883 and stayed until his death 46 years later. During those years he worked constantly on the once solidly respectable market garden, with its spruce, cy-

press and tight-clipped hedges of box. Poppies replaced the cabbages; irises and marigolds filled the onion beds. His neighbours were deeply suspicious.

When Monet bought more land on the far side of the road and started to make his famous water garden, suspicion turned to open hostility. Representations were made to the Prefect of the Eure. "Blow Art. What about our water?" asked the Givernois. Monet pulled rank and strings and got his lily pond. The Art Institute of Chicago, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, the Musée d'Orsay in Paris and others got their pictures - part of a long series of paintings of the waterlily pond that engaged

Monet in the last part of his life.

It was not all plain sailing. The first phase of the great pond project was finished by the autumn of 1893. The famous wooden bridge was built. Willows, alders, bamboos and Japanese cherries were planted, along with quantities of water lilies. Unfortunately, the unsurfaced road dividing the house from the water garden was a busy one. The constant traffic created clouds of dust that settled thickly on the waterlily pads. Even plein-air painters have their breaking-point and eventually Monet paid for the road alongside his garden to be tarred.

This is all very reassuring. Gazing at the artist's translucent canvases, it is easy to forget that the things that look most effortless usually require the most effort. The tranquil, seemingly timeless lily pond was born out of conflict and hard labour.

"It took me a long time to understand my water-lilies," Monet wrote of his water garden at Giverny. "I had planted them for the pure pleasure of it, and I grew them without thinking of painting them..."

The garden provided constant inspiration for Monet's incomparable canvases. Should gardeners take it as an equally compelling model? Only up to a point. The paths are hideously surfaced inarmac. An equally offensive chain-link fence marks off the far perimeter of the lily pond. The garden contains practically nothing to sustain interest between the death

of the dahlias and the advent of

the tulips.

And then, all of a sudden, I had the revelation of the enchantment of my pond. I took up my palette. Since then I have had no other model."

His waterlilies, painted obsessively during the six years from 1903 to 1909, dominate the current exhibition. When you look at them, think of his gardeners, who worked equally obsessively to keep the pond in a condition fit to be painted. Punting out in a flat-bottomed boat, they scooped up the green algae that threatened to tarnish the pool's reflective surface; they fastidiously removed any leaves shed by the weeping willow; they rinsed debris from the waterlilies' shiny leaf-pads; they pruned and trimmed so that the plants did not spread over the surface of the water.

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of the dahlias and the advent of

the tulips.

The layout of the long, thin beds, ideal for a market garden, provides a series of pretty plantboxes, but not a design.

The planting, made up, to a great extent, from flowering annuals and tender exotics, is

labour-intensive (too much so

for most amateurs, however

passionate) and there is little of

the structural planting that in

the best-planned gardens pro-

vides a backdrop for more

ephemeral foregrounds.

French garden style, fossilised in Monet's Giverny garden,

is entirely different from the

subdued English herba-

cous style. It is more akin to

the splendid, bright plantings of

municipal parks, geometric

flowerbeds with spring spreads

of forget-me-nots punctuated by

brilliant red and yellow tulips,

summer groups of orange and

red dahlias, with quantities of

purple-red pelargoniums.

So the first step to making

your own English Giverny is to

toss in sleepy schemes of grey,

pink and mauve and dive head

first into colour. Nasturtiums,

gladioli, canna, yellow and

orange rudbeckias and sun-

flowers are the flowers we should be looking at. Pot marigolds, aquilegias, snapdragons and asters should be on your list this year.

Profusion - of flowers rather than foliage - is the overwhelming impression you get when you step into the garden at Giverny. For this you need sun. The cool, damp summer we had last year produced good foliage plants but was disastrous for many annual flowers.

In a hot summer, pelargoniums can be set out sooner, dahlias will come into flower by July. Spiky cactus dahlias seemed particularly favoured by Monet. When I was last there in mid-October, a dark dahlia called 'Jet' was looking fabulous in the borders either side of the Grande Allée. It was partnered by the spider blooms of annual cleome, one of the few annuals with foliage as good as its flowers. Those who still baulk at the thought of a dahlia at close quarters should let themselves in gently with a variety such as the deep red 'Christopher Taylor'. If you squint slightly, it looks just like a waterlily.

The Monet style depends on two main flushes, spring and summer following each other on the same patch of ground. Snowdrops, aubrietas and juncos will do for the first part of the season. Use oriental poppies. Shear off the foliage when it has died and follow them with brilliant red 'Bishop of Llandaff' dahlias. Shock the neighbours. Monet did.

Monet in the Twentieth Century begins today at the Royal Academy of Arts, Piccadilly, London W1V 0DS and continues until 18 April. Open Sun-Thurs (9am-6pm) and Fri-Sat (9am-10pm). Admission £9. Numbers of visitors will be limited; tickets can be booked in advance through Ticketmaster (0990 344 444).

For a vivid account of the man and his garden, read 'Monet's Water Lilies' by Vivian Russell (Frances Lincoln, £14.99). The garden at Giverny is open 1 April-31 October (10am-6pm) every day except Monday. Take a day trip on Eurostar from London Waterloo to the Gare du Nord in Paris. Use the Métro to transfer to the Gare St Lazare, then take a train (1 hour) to Vernon. You will then find the garden a short taxi-ride away.

For summer choose low-growing *Campanula carpatica* or a tangle of creeping nasturtium to edge the front of your beds. Fill in behind with snapdragons, interplanted with dahlias. Use asters with Japanese anemones to take over later in the season. Try pelargoniums with canna. Plant pinks with dark-blue monkshoods to take over later in the season. Use oriental poppies. Shear off the foliage when it has died and follow them with brilliant red 'Bishop of Llandaff' dahlias. Shock the neighbours. Monet did.

The irises, although flowering only for a relatively short period in May, lend strong foliage to the planting schemes that follow. The rare *Iris germanica* is sweetly scented and has rich, purplish-blue petals with a white beard. It is early and the foliage is evergreen. Since

Monet's death, many hybrids of this bearded iris have been raised, and it remains a favourite with French nurserymen, particularly those in the south of the country.

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CUTTINGS

NEWS FROM THE GARDENER'S WORLD

reassuring for their fans. If clematis thrive there, then they shouldn't complain in the average garden.

At the end of the first three-year trial period, the society awarded certificates of merit to four varieties: 'Ajmonshika' is a non-clinging herbaceous

climber, with bell-shaped mauve or rose-pink flowers from June to September. It will grow up to 6ft or more, with support, and should be cut hard back in late February. 'Petit Falcon' is another award-winning herbaceous variety, with nodding flowers of deep violet-purple. It has the same flowering season as 'Ajmonshika' but does not grow so tall.

'Broughton Star' is a

vigorous clematis of the montana type. It has pink semi-double flowers, well set off against bronze foliage. Like *C. montana* it flowers in May to June and can spread up to 15-20ft. If it gets out of hand, trim it back immediately after flowering.

'Romantika' is a late-flowering (July-October) hybrid of the jackmanii type, with dark violet flowers as much as 4in across. The foliage is pale green and the stems will climb to 6ft or 7ft. Prune hard in early spring.

THE SEARCH is on for the Young Horticulturist of the Year (1998-99), to win a travel bursary of £1,200. John Love, president of the Institute of Horticulture, is keen to get the word out to young people (under 25) working in nurseries and garden centres. Students of horticulture also qualify. Heats are held regionally, with the final at Sandown Park on 17 April. For details, contact Angela Clarke, the Institute of Horticulture, 14/15 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8PS (0171-245 6943).

FOR TWO years, the British Clematis Society has been testing various varieties at The Garden of the Rose, Chiswell Green, Herts. The trial ground is exposed and the soil dry and stony. That is tough on clematis, but

reassuring for their fans. If clematis thrive there, then they shouldn't complain in the average garden.

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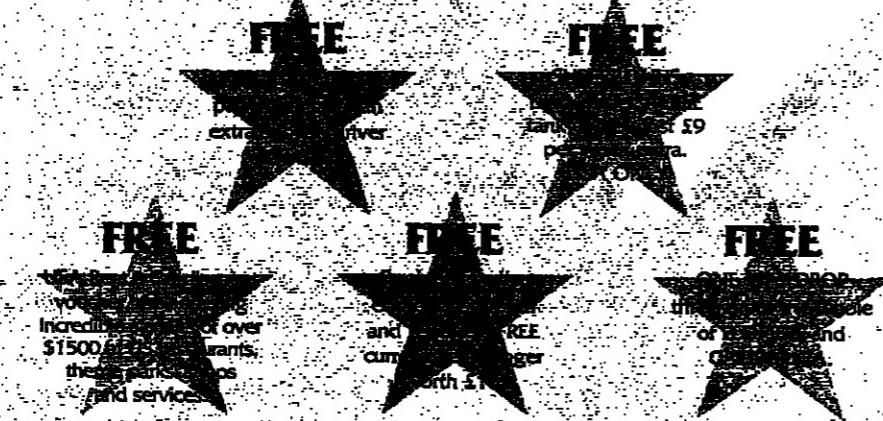
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Where the Zulu war-cry echoes

The Battle of Isandlwana was re-staged yesterday. Terence Kelly goes on the trail of Imperial conflict in 19th-century Africa

Driving through the green hills of Zululand today, it is easy to realise why Queen Victoria's Welsh soldiers once felt that they were back in their valleys. But when Lt Charles Raw's patrol rode up the ridge overlooking the Ngwebeni valley on 22 January 1879, what they saw below was something never seen in Wales: 24,000 Zulu warriors awaiting battle.

What followed were the Battle of Isandlwana, one of Britain's worst imperial disasters, and the defence of the Rorke's Drift mission station, one of the most heroic fights, when 11 Victoria Crosses were won. The frequently televised film *Zulu* keeps Rorke's Drift fresh in the popular mind, whereas *Zulu Dawn*, re-telling the Isandlwana defeat, is more of a collector's rarity.

These, and the other battle sites of the Zulu Wars, are largely intact. They form a grimly evocative itinerary in this part of eastern South Africa. The battlefields route includes the site where a Boer punitive expedition avenged the killing of their emissary, Piet Retief, in 1838. The laager of 64 wagons behind which their sharpshooters took cover has been re-created in massive bronze as a symbol of Boer triumphalism. In three hours, 3,000 Zulus died. The nearby river ran so red that it was rechristened Blood river. Only three Boers were injured.

By 1879 the lessons of this battle were forgotten. At the foot of the dramatic hill of Isandlwana, monuments mark the spots where British riflemen were drawn up, largely in the open. No defensive laager of wagons was constructed. After all, none had been needed to subdue less martial tribes to the south.

The Zulus still charged the rifle lines head on, suffering many casualties. But you can walk where their legendarily fast-moving impis outflanked the imperial force on each side with the deadly "horns of the buffalo" tactic. With their superb

fieldcraft, courage and discipline – and their vast numbers – they were unbeatable. Some 1,300 British and colonial troops fell.

As a pilgrim to this remote and bloody spot, I felt it fitting to contribute some rands to a fund to have fresh whitewash spread to highlight the cairns marking the mass graves of the British. Some soldiers escaped, and vigorous visitors can walk and clamber along the Fugitives' Trail which they took beside the Buffalo river. The final swim across to the Natal bank is assisted today by an inflated tyre. On the ridge above, a monument stands over the graves of Lts Coghill and Melville, both awarded the VC for their attempts to save the regimental colours.

At nearby Rorke's Drift, stones mark out where Lts Bromhead and Chard improvised parapets of mealie bags and biscuit boxes, behind which just over 100 fit men fought off 4,000 Zulus that same night. The original buildings here have been reconstructed and one contains a museum.

Nearby lie the graves of 17 soldiers who fell, and that of Jim Rorke, the drunken Irish trader who had killed himself a few years earlier when his gin supplies ran out. Under his will, sit of concrete cover his corpse to prevent medicine men from digging up the bones to strengthen their potions.

Near Rorke's Drift, a new bridge crosses the Buffalo river where General Lord Chelmsford forced it. Zulu children now cross it returning from school, and the girls curtsey politely to picnicking visitors.

Chelmsford had divided his invasion force into three to envelop the Zulus and had then divided his own central column again to advance on the Zulu capital, Ulundi, leaving his reserve at Isandlwana. His supply columns and marching troops, fatigued by heat, thick uniforms and numerous diseases – and spread out over long stretches of track – were wide open to Zulu attacks, yet advanced largely unscathed.



Spears against rifles – the re-enactment of the Battle of Isandlwana this week

T J Lemon/PictureNET

However, the force on his left wing partly came to grief on the bleak, snake-ridden ridge of Hlobane. Colonel Redvers Buller's men mounted on one side to capture a herd of Zulu cattle. But, in spite of the lessons of Isandlwana two months earlier, he cannot have reckoned adequately, and found 2,000 Zulus coming up the other side.

You can see the Devil's Pass down which the captured cattle were supposed to have been driven, but whose rocks proved diabolical indeed. Buller extricated the troops down this, winning a VC but losing some 200 men.

The battlefield guide recounts how two soldiers found themselves cut off by Zulu spearmen on the ridge. One put his rifle barrel in his mouth and pulled the trigger. The other, an 18-year-old, galloped over a 70-ft cliff, fell into bushes and survived. So did his horse, but it died within 24 hours.

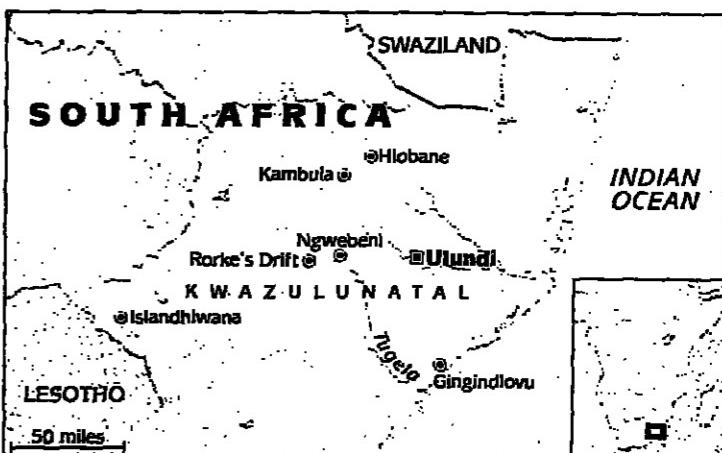
Nothing remains of its siege camp, but nearby is Gingindlovu – "Gin Gin I Love You" to the troops – where Chelmsford, accepting the lessons of past battles, put his 5,800 men into a laager of wagons and trenches. Some 1,000 Zulu attackers fell, half of them killed by cavalry and damaged his memorial Battle-field tourists helped villagers, who earn an income from visitors, to clear the site and get repairs done.

In the battle for Ulundi, Chelmsford again kept his men in close formation, much like one of Wellington's squares holding off French cuirassiers at Waterloo. The square held, the attackers retreated, the cavalry went in and that was the end of the independent Zulu nation.

A memorial building on the site bears the names of the Zulu regiments that fought there, though such plaques are not a normal Zulu custom. The downfall of the Zulu kingdom is symbolised again on the Tugela river to the south, on the Natal border, where British officials seeking an excuse for war had

presented the Zulus with an ultimatum that they could never accept. The Ultimatum Tree still stands, but a few yards away a motorway carries modern traffic into Zululand.

He paid £2,549 for flights, visa, coach, guides, accommodation, all food and a final-day visit to the Hluhluwe game reserve



CONSIDER A can of baked beans (or, if you are a business-class sort of person, asparagus spears). It would surely be absurd for the manufacturer to say, "Until now, we've included the cost of the container in our prices, but from next week we are going to charge you extra for it." Yet that precisely mirrors what's happening in fish aviation.

To continue the canned food analogy: suppose there has been a vicious beans war (which sounds messy, though safer than an asparagus-spear war). On the horizon lurks a possible rise in the cost of tin. The leading beans manufacturer holds a crisis meeting. A bright spark says "I know – let's pretend to customers that what we pay our suppliers for tin is a form of tax. And we'll add the cost to the price of our product in advance of the rise, so in effect they'll be paying us extra for exactly the same product."

A sneaky way of charging more

Substitute air travel for beans and British Airways for the manufacturer; and you find out why fares are to rise by up to 15 per cent.

Just as anyone who is selling cans of beans needs tin, so anyone who is selling air travel needs airports. Airlines pay airports for the services provided, in the same way that they pay their staff and fuel suppliers; it is a normal commercial transaction. Yet after next weekend the cost of these passenger service charges (PSCs) will appear in the box on air tickets marked "tax".

The justification given for the change is airlines' fears that airport charges will rise when duty-free sales within the European Union end in July. When asked whether it will take advantage of the change to raise overall fares, British Airways says that the question is inappropriate, since fares fluctuate all the time. Yet callers to BA's reservations line are being told that after next weekend, "tax" on flights will rise. Oh no, it won't. But, according to what BA sales agents are telling travellers, fares will.

To revert to the groceries analogy: upon learning that the can of beans is now 15 per cent more expensive than it was last week, the rational shopper would simply buy a different brand from a supplier who has not raised the price. In aviation, sadly, this is not always an option. KLM UK, which competes with BA, says that it will definitely raise fares after next weekend. Virgin Atlantic is considering making increases.

British Midland says it has no plans to do so; I shall be watching to see whether its fare for the 250-mile trip from Glasgow to East Midlands, already an ambitious £153, goes up after next weekend.

EVEN WHEN fares do not rise, the travel agent will lose out as a result of this change. Imagine

the airports increase their fees, the theory goes, passengers will see that the rise is not the fault of the airlines.

"What next?", grumbled one travel agent yesterday. "Will they tell us they won't be paying commission on the part of the ticket price that they use to buy fuel?"

You will not be astonished to learn that the aviation industry has quite a bit of "previous" on price-fixing, which is why fares are regulated for the government by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). The watchdog apparently allowed the change to go through in the fond belief that it comprised merely a procedural adjustment, with no effect on fares. It will be interesting to see the CAA's reaction to the rises.

The CAA also appears fondly to believe, according to a statement I have seen sent, that the passenger service charge at British airports is a flat £5.

Wrong: each airport sets its own charges, and these vary wildly.

On a journey from A to B

charges total £17.80 if A is Aberdeen and B is Belfast, but only 50 pence if A is Fair Isle and B is Lerwick. Nor is there agreement on whether charges should apply to arriving or departing passengers.

So get ready for some hilarious re-routings as travellers attempt to minimise these charges. It could make a good board game, a kind of aviation Twister; perhaps, or Aeropoly.

The game could be Terminal

Twister; perhaps, or Aeropoly.

The square you definitely don't

want to land on is Benbecula. This Hebridean airport charges a whacking £16.20 for arriving passengers. Yet Benbecula would be a good place to start a journey because the tiny airport makes no charge for departing passengers.

Fly to Glasgow (where arriving passengers are not charged), then make your way by bus to Inverness; avoiding the £7.40 departure charge at Scotland's biggest airport and the £6.40 arrival fee for Inverness will more than pay for

the fare. From here you can dodge all charges by flying to Manchester (£7.70 is levied on departing passengers, but nothing on arrivals) and getting the bus to Liverpool (where arrivals by air pay £7.30, but passengers depart free of charge).

A flight to any London airport incurs no charge – as long as you avoid City airport, where arrivals pay £5.60.

The inflight catering? Beans, or asparagus for business class.

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There's plenty of room to party and roam around at Treowen, a 17th-century Grade I listed house near Monmouth

Andrew Hasson

Join the country-house set

Stuck for a location for that special party? Don't worry – a 17th-century mansion could be yours for the weekend. By Gill Hasson

It is an obvious place to lie low, I thought, as I covered in the priest's hole: evidence of the mansion's recusant past. From the end of the hall, I could hear Harry and Sam scampering up the spiral staircase. They must be going to hide in the loft, I thought. Suddenly I froze. Above me, I could hear 10-year-old Tom and Emily's screams from one of the third-floor attic rooms; Stuart and Andy had found them.

I could just about make out the sounds of chatting and laughter from the rest of the group downstairs in the kitchen, unaware of the mayhem up here. Well, why should they worry? It was only three of the grown-ups playing murder in the dark with the kids. Who could resist? It's not often we get the chance to indulge in this sort of play.

A birthday or an anniversary is a great excuse to meet up with friends and family. But supposing you live in one corner of the country, and many of your potential guests live miles away. How do you get them all together?

Well, you simply entertain on a grand scale and throw a house

party – hire a large country house and invite everyone to stay for a long weekend. A large group of us did just that for our friend Jane's 40th birthday. We got together at Treowen, a huge, 17th-century Grade I listed house four miles from Monmouth in south Wales. The property is privately let by the present owners, the Wheelock family, who lived and

farmed here until 1993. Their brochure promised us "panelled rooms, magnificent staircases, delightful gardens, breathtaking views, private woodland walks and a lovely position at the far end of a half-mile-long drive in one of the most beautiful corners of Wales".

No promises were broken. It was all completely true. This enormous

sleeping 15, located in the fishing village of Port Isaac. It is situated on a cliff top, with great sea views from the bedrooms at the front. Long weekend £2451-£692.

Helpful Holidays (01647 433593): Blagdon, near Torquay, can sleep 23. Until recently this 16th-century manor house was a hotel, but has been converted to self-catering. The heated swimming-pool, the terraces and the lawn could make the ideal setting for a summer celebration. Catering can be arranged – anything from

full dinners to small suppers. Long weekend £794-£1,325.

Hoseasons Country Cottages (01502 501515): Nether Ollerbrook Farm in Derbyshire is a former stone barn sleeping 24. Close to the Pennine Way, it is bookable as three self-contained cottages or as one large property. Dinner-party catering can be arranged and the owner will arrange barrel delivery for the bar. Long weekend £502-£1,009.

English Country Cottages (0890 851155): Hartington

house, built in 1627, can sleep up to 30 people in bedrooms with names such as the Cherub Bedroom, the Passage Bedroom and – a personal favourite this – the Chamber Over the Great Chamber.

Our celebration group was made up of 17 adults and five children. And there was no need for anyone to feel forced into being sociable all of the time. You could easily escape to one of the magnificent bedrooms or drawing-rooms to nurse a hangover. Indeed, over the course of the weekend we hardly saw the five kids in the group. Treowen is a children's delight. They spent most of their time exploring outside, playing badminton and mini-snooker in the banqueting hall, or running up and

down the 72 steps of the 6ft-wide solid oak staircase.

Apart from deciding whom to invite, the only other piece of organisation required was arranging the meals. Jane had already planned the meals we were going to have and had phoned us all the week before to tell us what part of her shopping list each was to bring. The kitchen

is more than adequately equipped to allow catering for large groups.

The birthday banquet took place in the oak-panelled dining-room. Meal over, it was upstairs to continue the celebrations with dancing to loud music in the Long Drawing Room – 34ft long, in fact. We brought our own sound system, and we played it very loud, keenly aware that there were no neighbours to disturb.

The next day, fresh air and exercise were provided by a walk to one of the two pubs within a two-mile walk of the house. For those who wish to travel a little further afield, there is the beautiful Wye Valley, the Forest of Dean and the romantic ruin of Tintern Abbey to explore.

Whatever the occasion, Treowen is different enough to provide the perfect setting for a memorable celebration. After a few hours, it felt as though we had suddenly inherited this grand old property from a long-lost relative; it was ours, to treat as our own, if only for a few days.

To find out more about Treowen, call 01600 712031. Prices range from £290 to £1,250 for a long weekend (Friday to Monday).

THE DIY HOUSE-PARTY

Other organisations offering country houses to rent include:

Rural Retreats (01386 701177): Brusyard Hall in Suffolk can sleep 20. This Grade II listed 14th-century house also has a priest's hole, and large gardens. A local vineyard sells wine for your party. A phone and fax machine are available for guests who can't bear to be incommunicado. Babysitting by arrangement. Long weekend £1,290-£1,561. Also about Bellevue in Cornwall. This is a large Edwardian terraced house,

sleeping 15, located in the fishing village of Port Isaac. It is situated on a cliff top, with great sea views from the bedrooms at the front. Long weekend £2451-£692.

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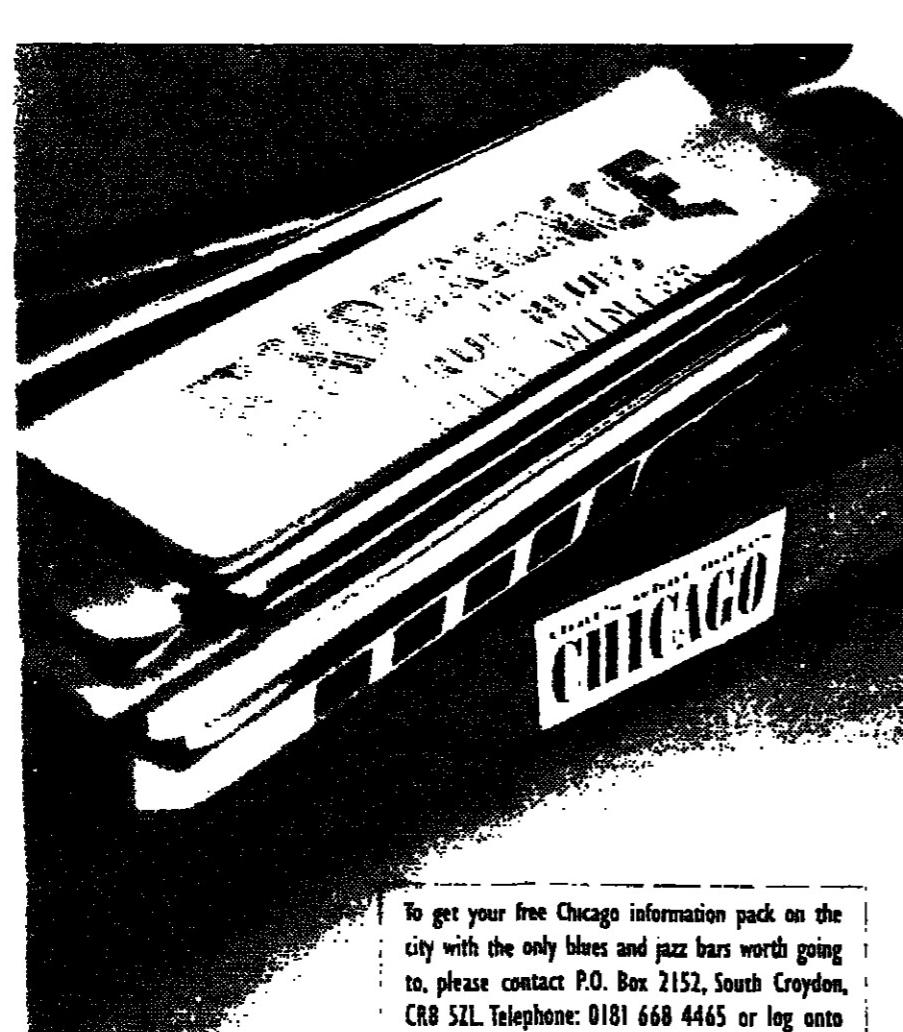
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You can travel from London or from cities such as Birmingham and Manchester on any available service between now and 28 March, but bookings must be made a fortnight in advance. The return fare is £19.50.

The same rules apply to travel to points beyond Dublin.

A reader, Dick Clark, of Newport, writes to point out that you can save another 10 per cent by booking on the Internet (www.nationalexpress.co.uk). Enquiries this week have revealed a basic London-Dublin fare at the old rate of £25. But the 10 per cent discount works for other National Express trips.

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NEWS FROM THE TRAVEL WORLD

True or false?
The Thomas Cook Overseas Timetable shows all Mexican bus routes.

False, as the valiant editors explain in the new edition of this excellent publication (£19.99):

"There are so many buses in Mexico that it is quite impossible to show them properly. For example, Cristobal Colon runs a service from the capital to Cuautla – a distance of about 150km (94 miles). They seem to have four grades of service, from 'luxe' down to 'ordinario'."

There are 'luxe' buses at least three times hourly, generally non-stop; 'semi-luxe' buses run at least three times hourly, sometimes non-stop, sometimes calling at principal places en route. 'Directos' run even more frequently and call at all main points, while 'ordinarios' run every few minutes and stop anywhere.

They all have different fares, and different overall journey times. In the space available to us virtually all we can do is list

the service as 'frequent' (an understatement if ever there was one) and quote the highest possible fare. There are also other operators on this route, and much the same situation applies between all cities of any significance."

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Bauhaus in the mountains



Stephen Wood

Skiers arriving at Flaine are greeted by sculptures such as *Le Boqueteau* by Jean Dubuffet

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SKI HOTLINE	Resort	Area open	Comment	Slopes (cm) Low	Up	Last snow	Temp	Forecast
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To listen to the latest snow and weather report: Phone 0901 47 70 051 + code	Lofer	100%	Good higher up	20	115	14.1	OC	Settled
For a fax copy of the latest snow and weather report: Fax 0906 55 00 086 + code	BULGARIA							
Voss80% Madseimo80%	Pamporovo	100%	Need more snow	40	60	14.1	-3C	Sunny
Lake Louise 100% Fresh powder	CANADA							
Chamonix95% Morzine90%	LAKE LOUISE	100%	Packed powder	50	135	15.1	-1C	Unsettled
ITALY	FRANCE	100%	Packed powder	50	120	13.1	-1C	Unsettled
Cavalese80% Madseimo80%	Galtür	100%	Good cords	60	80	11.1	-1C	Bright
Voss80% Very good cords	SCOTLAND	100%	Very good cords	60	140	19.1	1C	Cloudy
Madseimo80%	Calder	50%	Snow to prepare	20	45	21.1	OC	Showers
Sas Fee90%	SWITZERLAND	100%	Good snow cover	40	220	14.1	1C	Dry & mild
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It might be derided as a concrete monstrosity, but the Sixties-built Flaine boasts art and architecture as well as great views and good skiing. By Stephen Wood

The Hungarian-born architect Marcel Breuer first saw the rocky bowl in which he was to build the French ski resort of Flaine in late 1960. He arrived by helicopter, because there was no road up to the site, set in the mountains of the Haute-Savoie below Mont Blanc. What he saw delighted him.

"A wonderful place," he said. "How can we avoid spoiling it?" Despite his international renown - he studied and taught in the 1920s at the Bauhaus school in Germany, then practised in Britain and the USA - Breuer needed special dispensation to design Flaine, because he was not qualified as an architect in France. It was four years before Breuer was authorised to work on the resort, which the director of planning for the region confidently predicted would "be

considered beautiful 50 or 100 years from now".

Flaine is now 30 years old, almost to the day: its inauguration took place on 19 January 1969. And, to judge from the remarks about it in the 1999 *Good Skiing Guide*, it is making only slow progress towards being considered beautiful. The guide describes Flaine as "a disaster area".

The rival *Where to Ski* guide places Flaine a close second to Les Menuires as the ugliest resort in the Alps. Both guides recognise its excellent skiing, reliable snow and well-earned reputation as a family resort. But neither of their reports would entice skiers to Flaine. Which is unfortunate, because it is an exceptional place.

The 1960s were a boom time for ski resorts in France: when Flaine opened, Arc 1600 was only a few weeks old, and Avoriaz - just up the road - was still being developed. With its

limited car-access and ski-in, ski-out accommodation, Flaine has a lot in common with them.

But Breuer's design for Flaine is the furthest removed from the romantic ski-resort ideal of pitched-roof chalets and cow-sheds. Three clusters of concrete blocks march up one side of the bowl: the overall effect is brutal.

The architecture is extraordinary, yet the person who made Flaine such an singular resort is not Breuer but the man who hired him. Eric Boissonnas, who is now in his late eighties, founded Flaine, and it is thanks to him that the resort has a 500-seat concert hall, outdoor sculptures by Dubuffet, Vasarely and Picasso and a lending library with books in English and German as well as French.

For those who ski at Val d'Isère, it might be difficult to think of a link between "ski resort" and "culture". But Boissonnas managed to put the two together, adding a bit of religion: he commissioned a delightful ecumenical chapel from Breuer, hung with modern art, which sits by the main square.

Flaine has recently been bought by a subsidiary of Meribel's operating company, and its ski area is now benefiting from an investment programme of £22m over five years.

It was Boissonnas, of course, who chose his resort's site (after a brief flirtation with an alternative, near Méribel). And he chose wisely: it's a wonderful place for skiers, as well as architects. The skiing goes up to 2400m at Les Grandes Platières, which is served by a fast and efficient gondola from the resort. On a clear day, the view across to Mont Blanc and the Aiguille du Midi is sensational. The weather systems around Mont Blanc give Flaine more than its fair share of snow; and the north-

ern aspect of the runs back down to the resort keeps them in condition.

Those runs are predominantly red, some of them difficult and bumpy. Down to one side is a long blue and right in the centre of the slope, dodging under the gondola, is a black run. This wouldn't test the advanced skier, but it held the right amount of challenge for me, with tricky moguls at the top, steep and narrow gullys towards the middle, and then a fast sweep.

I enjoyed the skiing immensely, as well as the resort. Give me a few years and I'll find it beautiful, too.

For more information about Flaine, contact its UK representative, Erna Lou (0171 584 2841; brochure line 0171 584 7820). *Flaine, la création* by Eric Boissonnas, published by Editions du Linteau, Paris, costs 150 French francs

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THE ITINERARY

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Morning free. Drive to Cernobbio to visit the lovely garden of Il Pizzo, a varied and interesting garden built on a hillside leading down to Lake Como. Continue to Villa Cincogna Mezzoni a 16th century villa surrounded by exquisite gardens. Opera Interludes will perform at the villa. Day 4 Palazzo Pergo/Villa Medici.

Morning free. Drive to the Palazzo Pergo in Cremona di Inverno. After a guided tour of the house we will stroll through the splendid gardens seeing the lemon house, formal gardens, magnolia park and fountains. Continue

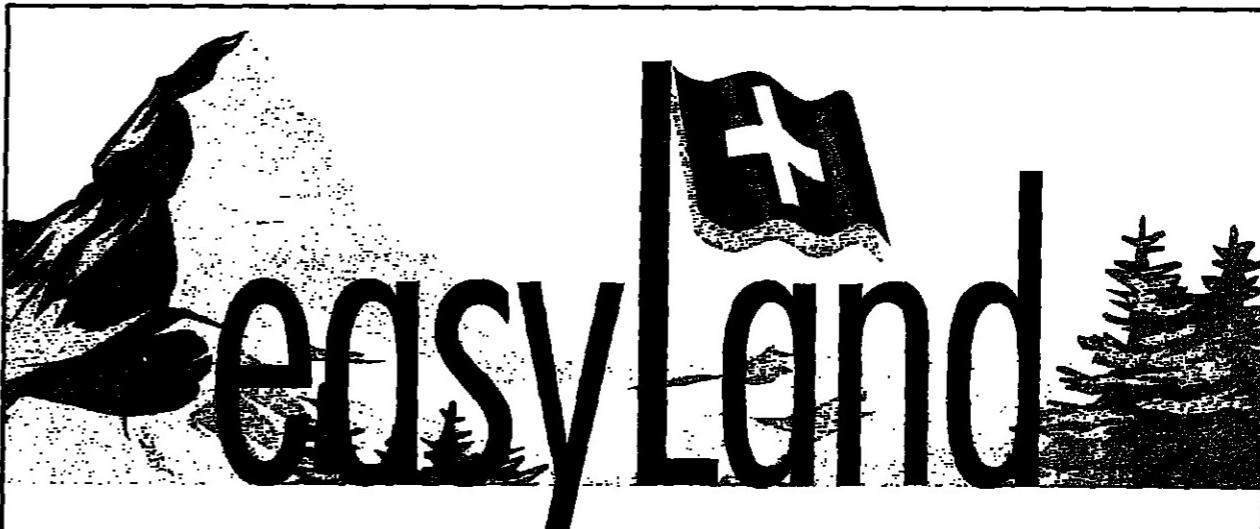
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Our programme will include a comprehensive excursion programme, but most days will allow for some free time to relax and enjoy the lovely facilities of the hotel and enjoy the dramatic scenery of Lake Como.

For us, such a visit offers the perfect combination of some of the most idyllic scenery imaginable, with concerts, where highlights from the grand operas will be performed in some extraordinarily beautiful settings. A highlight will be an evening cruise on Lake Como with dinner aboard the *Concordia*, a restored vintage vessel.

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The sweet and sour island

Penang remains an unspoilt part of Malaysia. But get there before the developers do. By Katherine Tanko

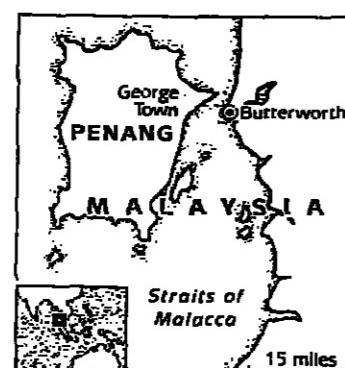
It can be tough being a tourist in Penang – especially at meal times. This island, squeezed between the Straits of Malacca, within a sniff of the Malaysian mainland, is famed for its multi-ethnic makeup and is consequently packed with restaurants, food stalls and night markets serving a tantalising variety of cuisines.

Some days it can take a superhuman effort to decide between the Hainan chicken rice and a spicy Tamil curry, hot-and-sour assam laksa or a Malay char-grilled satay. Variety has always been the spice of life in Penang. The sleepy backwater of Chinese shop houses and colonial bungalows of the west coast of peninsular Malaysia boasts one of the richest collections of original 19th-century urban architecture in all of Asia. But unlike other parts of Asia, where many historic buildings were swept away in a wave of modernisation, Penang is yet a living museum of architecture.

The island's greatest riches are George Town, Penang's laid-back urban centre. I began a walking tour at Fort Cornwallis, an 18th-century brick fort perched on the easternmost tip of the island. It was here that Francis Light – a young English captain chasing his own dreams of empire – claimed Penang for the British East India Company in 1786.

Flying in the face of official company policy, he created a free and neutral port where land was easy to acquire, in the hope of attracting the most enterprising merchants and settlers. It worked. Malays from Kedah, Chinese from Malacca, Tamils, Arabs, Persians and others flocked to the island to seek their fortunes. A lack of formal segregation – common in other colonial ports – made Penang the first truly multi-racial society in Asia, a compact melting-pot where a unique "Straits Culture" emerged – so called because of Penang's position.

Light is buried in the Protestant cemetery, just up the street on Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah. And here, beneath the leafy branches of gnarled frangipani trees, lie other tombs of early European settlers. Among



them is Thomas Leonowens, husband of Anna whose later adventures as a schoolmistress in Siam were immortalised in the film, *The King and I*. The cemetery marks the start of what was once known as "European Road", Penang's first posh suburb where the island's colonial elite built spacious mansions in ample gardens. Sir Stamford Raffles stayed here during his six-year tenure as Assistant Secretary to the Governor of Penang, before going on to found Singapore. (You can find out more about him in an exhibition held at the British Museum in London).

The rise of Singapore marked the end of Penang – as a major commercial port, at least. Yet despite the decline in its fortunes, Penang never really suffered, settling instead into a comfortable retirement financed by tin, rubber, and, more recently, tourism.

A few blocks west of Fort Cornwallis is the Acheen and Armenia Street enclave where the earliest of Penang's settlers lived, worshipped and worked. The graceful Acheen Street mosque, built by a wealthy pepper magnate from Aceh in northern Sumatra, is the oldest mosque on the island to survive in its original form. Built at the beginning of the 19th century, it has a distinctive octagonal minaret, Chinese swallow-ridge roof and Moorish arches.

The area was also famous for its association with Penang's powerful Chinese clans. Khoo Kongsi is the most elaborate and ornate of the clan houses, with beautifully painted ceilings and frescoes, gilded wood



George Town in Penang still boasts one of the richest collections of 19th-century urban architecture in Asia

Simon Arnold/Eye Ubiquitous

panels with elaborate carved stone pillars and walls depicting scenes out of Chinese legends. Built in 1906, the present temple replaced an earlier building that burnt to the ground, reportedly because of its magnificence provoked the gods.

Ironically, no traces of Penang's Armenian community remain on the street named in their honour. The island's most famous Armenian residents were the Sarkies brothers who established both the recently renovated Eastern and Oriental

Hotel on Farquhar Street, and the Crag Hotel on Penang Hill. These establishments were the first of a colonial hotel empire that would include the Strand in Rangoon (Burma), the Majapahit in Surabaya (Indonesia) and the world-famous Raffles in Singapore.

One of Armenia Street's most outstanding examples of early Straits Architecture is the eclectically styled mansion of Muslim trader Syed Alatas. This beautifully restored 19th-century house, with its

decorative fanlight openings, wooden shutters and airy interior, now serves as Penang's Heritage Centre. Its aim is to stimulate interest in preserving Penang's architectural heritage and to provide information on how to restore its valuable buildings.

For at the moment, little is being done to promote Penang's burgeoning "heritage tourism" industry. The tourist board is still using old images of an especially graceless, concrete commercial tower – representing "modern Penang" – to

promote the island while every year historic buildings fall to the developer's axe.

Last year alone, nine state-owned buildings were illegally demolished to make way for a new hotel while a number of supposedly protected houses were torn down.

So get to the streets of George Town soon, while traders and merchants, workers and students, Indian, Chinese and Malay, get on with the business of living as they have done for the last 200 years.

Through discount agents such as Bridge the World, 0171-911 0900, you can get a return flight from London to Penang via Singapore for £440 on Singapore Airlines.

Alternatively, get a cheap flight to Kuala Lumpur and take the train from there to the city of Butterworth (seven to eight hours, £12), which is on the mainland adjacent to Penang.

Malaysian Tourist Office, 57 Trafalgar Square, London WC2N 5DU (0171-930 7932)

Oh for a little heart-shaped bureaucracy

So, the Balinese marriage formalities were too complicated for Jerry Hall and Mick Jagger. If only they'd gone to Nevada. By Charlotte Hindle

JERRY DARLING, you just chose the wrong place. It seems you and Mick didn't properly tie the knot because of the bureaucratic tangle. When you should have been trudging the streets of Jakarta getting the right pieces of paper to allow you legally to marry in Indonesia, you were no doubt enjoying some prenuptial nookie on the beach in Bali.

The prospect of a wedding abroad sounds divine, but in many places you have to jump through all manner of legalistic hoops to make sure the marriage certificate is worth the paper it's lovingly inscribed upon. One place you don't is the heart-shaped, lavender-scented city of pink neon: Las Vegas.

We made point of flying United – when you're getting married little things like the name of an airline seem important to us. We knew we'd landed at the right airport because we could see the outline of a pyramid gleaming in the sunshine, close to the runway. We were in Las Vegas; the Egyptian architecture belonged to the Luxor Hotel, and we had 24 hours in which to "make our wedding."

Getting married in Nevada is fun, different – and, most importantly, easy. The wedding breakfast is a full-on American affair – pancakes, waffles, maple syrup, creamy butter



Heart-shaped city of pink neon: Las Vegas

and revoltingly weak filtered coffee. Las Vegas Boulevard, universally known as The Strip, is where you find almost all of Las Vegas' wedding chapels. At its top are many of the fantastical hotels (where you probably stay) and at its bottom you'll find the County Court, where you buy your marriage licence.

After breakfast we walked its length, checking out the Little Chapel of the West, the Little Chapel of Love and many others on both sides of the road. To be

truthful, Jerry the more we saw the less inclined we felt to entrust them with the happiest day of our lives. Many were pretty tacky, full of plastic flowers, fake stained-glass windows and doll's-house pews. But, worst of all, we didn't really take to the people who were running them. Some we wouldn't have bought a second-hand Elvis impersonator from.

About the one activity in America's glitz capital for which you don't need a photo ID is marriage. You just go and buy a licence.

Twenty minutes and a lot of laughter later, we emerged newly wed and headed straight

to Binion's Horseshoe Casino – not for a gamble but for a tipple. The place was dimly lit, packed with punters and buzzing with atmosphere. Its claim to fame – an illuminated horseshoe shape stacked with a million dollars' worth of real paper bills – was in the corner. You can get your photo taken in front of it for free; we got two.

By luck, the Moscow State

Circus was in town and performing a number of free shows in the covered shopping-arcade outside the casino. As we oozed through the crowd I fingered my new Russian wedding rings, trying not to attach too much significance to this post-Soviet coincidence.

Come sunset, we strolled back up The Strip. Outside Treasure Island Hotel, we

joined with parents and children to witness the life-size sea battle that takes place at regular intervals from late afternoon to late evening. Among the fireworks, the flames the screams, the canon-fire and the thickening smoke, we slurped champagne straight from the bottle, and eventually walked on. Next door at the Mirage Hotel the show contin-

ued. The waters around its fake volcano simmered, the rocks shuddered, and a deep rumbling noise crescendoed into a highly convincing volcanic eruption complete with polystyrene tectonics. The lava ran, the sky lit up, and we looked at each other. In a Las Vegas sort of way, the earth was moving for both of us.

Try it next time, Jerry.

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Visiting Cuba is like dipping into five centuries of history, the time that has elapsed since Christopher Columbus first came across the island. For various reasons Cuba has been the forgotten island in the Caribbean, caught in a time warp, known only for its political sensitivity and large cigars.

Yet Cuba is much more than this. Many of the towns and cities preserve their original colonial Spanish architecture – mansions, inner patios, squares, churches, cathedrals and old military fortresses are set in lush vegetation and rugged mountains with the sea providing a deep blue backdrop. The island also boasts a surprisingly colourful array of

flowers, fruit and birdlife.

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NEW FILMS

BULWORTH (18)

Director: Warren Beatty
Starring: Warren Beatty, Halle Berry
Disillusioned at the end of an election campaign, liberal senator Jay Bulworth (Beatty) turns loose cannon; lifting the lid on US politics, hanging out in the hood and delivering his speeches in rap stylings. Crude and condescending on occasion, yet audacious and committed. *Countrywide*

CLASS TRIP**(LA CLASSE DE NEIGE)** (15)

Director: Claude Miller
Starring: Clement Van Den Berghe, François Roy Nicolas (Van Den Berghe) is a schoolboy fantasist with few friends and a domineering dad. On a school skiing trip, he lets his dark imaginings run away with him, as Miller's child's-eye psychodrama switches between stark naturalism and florid dream sequences. *Limited release*

54 (15)

Director: Mark Christopher
Starring: Mike Myers, Ryan Phillippe
Christopher's retro-trip through the heyday of New York's Studio 54 boasts a glitterball turn from Myers (as club boss Steve Rubell), but not a whole

lot else. It's an under-developed run-through of dance-floor chic as Ryan Phillippe's busboy falls in with the beautiful folk. *Countrywide*

HILARY AND JACKIE (15)

Director: Amand Tucker
Starring: Emily Watson, Rachel Griffiths
Full-throttle playing from Rachel Griffiths and Emily Watson sustains Tucker's warts-and-all biopic of the Du Pré sisters. Hilary (shy, married flautist) and Jacqueline (world-famous cellist). Sibling rivalries, a ménage à trois and terminal illness are all carefully navigated by Tucker's finely-wrought direction. *Limited release*

PRACTICAL MAGIC (12)

Director: Griffin Dunne
Starring: Nicole Kidman, Sandra Bullock
Essentially a sibling soap-opera with a dash of mumbo-jumbo, *Practical Magic* sees Bullock and Kidman cast as two mismatched sisters raised from a line of witches and hexing any unlucky man who swings into their orbit. Its spick-and-span surface masks the turmoil of undigested influences (*Beetlejuice*, *Bewitched* etc). *Countrywide*

Xan Brooks

THE ACID HOUSE (18)

A trio of interrelated shorts culled from the stories of Irvine Welsh. *The Acid House* plays out in the down-and-dirty landscape of inner-city Edinburgh and darts with brio between a range of moods and tones.

ANTZ (PG)

If nothing else, this computer-animated trifile is the most unlikely Woody Allen movie we will ever see.

BABE: PIG IN THE CITY (U)

The follow-up to *Babe* tosses the hapless "sheep-pig" into the midst of the city where he becomes the unlikely saviour of a bunch of assorted waifs. Knockabout comedy is kept to a minimum in favour of a bleak animalistic fairytale.

DOBERMANN (18)

Vincent Cassel's born-to-be-bad gangster struts and sneers his way through a gleefully abstracted Paris while Cheky Karyo's bad-egg cop looks on balefully. It seems that this is what the new French cinema is all about: endless stylised carnage and iconic posing, plus a script that's going nowhere fast.

LITTLE VOICE (15)

Holed up in her bedroom, timid Jane Horrocks perfects strident Shirley Bassey/Judy Garland impersonations after she falls in with Michael Caine's sleazy impresario. Where director Mark Herman's last film, *Bronzed Off*, was a whole and solid effort, *Little Voice* proves altogether more bitty. But bracing black comedy, Horrocks' vocal pyrotechnics, plus a marvellously weighted turn from Caine push it through to the final curtain.

THE MASK OF ZORRO (PG)

This gaudy swashbuckler gallops full-speed through 19th-century California in the company of Antonio Banderas's authentically Hispanic do-gooder. A bite-sized history lesson on West Coast politics struggles amid a lot of colourful duels and clattering set-pieces.

MEET JOE BLACK (12)

Picking his way through Martin Brest's underdeveloped rehash of *Death Takes a Holiday* goes Brad Pitt's aquiline Grim Reaper, who gets chaperoned round the everyday delights of Planet Earth by Anthony Hopkins' dying billionaire. The

THE INDEPENDENT RECOMMENDS

THE THREE BEST FILMS



The Opposite of Sex (18)
Christina Ricci plays 16-year-old bitch-on-wheels Dedee, causing havoc when she moves in with her mild-mannered brother (Martin Donovan). Director Don Roos's script bristles with acidulous one-liners.

π PI (15)
Darren Aronofsky's début (left), filmed in sooty black-and-white, tells the story of a genius mathematician. This stylish indie movie combines *Wall Street*, Jewish mysticism and nightmarish headaches.

The Truman Show (PG)
Peter Weir's ingenious and unsettling fantasy is, in the end, an escape movie – in the case of Truman Burbank, it's breaking out of the round-the-clock TV docu-soap that is his own life.

ANTHONY QUINN

GENERAL RELEASE

THE THREE BEST PLAYS

**The Street of Crocodiles**

(Queen's Theatre)
Triumphant revival (right) of Theatre de Complicite's surreal, funny and searing plunge into the imagination of Polish-Jewish writer Bruno Schulz, shot dead by the Nazis in 1942. To 20 Feb

A Month in the Country

(RSC, Stratford)
Michael Attenborough directs this Brian Friel adaptation of Turgenev's portrait of all-consuming desire. In rep to 20 Feb

Martin Yesterday

(Royal Exchange, Manchester)
Marianne Elliott directs this sharp new play from cult Canadian dramatist Brad "Unidentified Human Remains" Fraser. To 6 Feb

PAUL TAYLOR

SITCOM (18)

In *Sitcom*, director François Ozon lets his ideas mangle madly off the leash. In this scattershot satire of middle-class mores, Ozon takes abundant pleasure in dismantling a standard nuclear family.

STAR TREK: INSURRECTION (PG)

A belated Christmas gift for Trekkies the land over, *Insurrection* hits the cinemas stuffed with in-the-know gags and wrapped up in more cornball romance than we're used to. The nominal story sees Patrick Stewart's do-gooding captain tangling with villainous F Murray Abraham, who's hatched a scheme to take over a planet of perpetual youth.

THE TRUMAN SHOW (PG)

See *The Independent Recommends*, above.

WHAT DREAMS MAY COME (15)

The corn-fed love-child of *It's a Wonderful Life* and *Ghost*, Robin Williams perfests a lopsided simper as the dead chapie who lights out to a cod-Impressionist heaven, before jetting southward to rescue his suicide-bride (Anabelle Sciorra) from a Gothic hell.

CINEMA
COUNTRYWIDE**ABERDEEN**

ODEON (08705-050007); *The Mask of Zorro* (PG); *The Parent Trap* (PG); *Meet Joe Black* (12); *Little Voice* (15); *Antz* (PG); *Star Trek: Insurrection* (PG); *Practical Magic* (12); *Psycho* (15); *Babe: Pig in the City* (U); *The Last Days of Disco* (15); *The Prince of Egypt* (U); *54* (15); *The Siege* (15); *Mulan* (U); *Enemy of the State* (15)

VIRGIN (0541-202050); *The Mask of Zorro* (PG); *The Parent Trap* (PG); *Meet Joe Black* (12); *Little Voice* (15); *Antz* (PG); *Star Trek: Insurrection* (PG); *Practical Magic* (12); *Psycho* (15); *Babe: Pig in the City* (U); *The Last Days of Disco* (15); *The Prince of Egypt* (U); *54* (15); *The Siege* (15); *Mulan* (U); *Enemy of the State* (15)

BIRMINGHAM

MAC (0121-440 3838); *Little Voice* (15); *The Set* (Unrated); *Men with GUNS* (Guns) (Hombres Armados) (15); *Last Luggage* (PG)

ODEON (08705-050007); *Little Voice* (15); *Rush Hour* (15); *The Exorcist* (25th Anniversary Release) (18); *Enemy of the State* (15); *Psycho* (15); *Ever After* (PG); *The Mask of Zorro* (PG); *Star Trek: Insurrection* (PG); *Antz* (PG); *Mulan* (U); *Enemy of the State* (15)

VIRGIN (0541-202050); *The Mask of Zorro* (PG); *The Parent Trap* (PG); *Meet Joe Black* (12); *Little Voice* (15); *Antz* (PG); *Star Trek: Insurrection* (PG); *Practical Magic* (12); *Psycho* (15); *Babe: Pig in the City* (U); *The Last Days of Disco* (15); *The Prince of Egypt* (U); *54* (15); *The Siege* (15); *Mulan* (U); *Enemy of the State* (15)

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CARLISLE
CITY (01228-514654); *Meet Joe Black* (12); *Babe: Pig in the City* (U); *Enemy of the State* (15); *Star Trek: Insurrection* (PG); *Metroland* (18)

LONSDALE CINEMAS (01228-514654); *Little Voice* (15); *The Prince of Egypt* (U); *Lost in Space* (PG); *My Name is Joe* (15); *The Siege* (15); *The Mask of Zorro* (PG); *The Parent Trap* (PG); *Practical Magic* (12); *Mrs Brown* (PG); *Antz* (PG)

CLYDEBANK

UGI (0990-889990); *Antz* (PG); *Mulan* (U); *The Mask of Zorro* (PG); *The Siege* (15); *The Parent Trap* (PG); *Meet Joe Black* (12); *Little Voice* (15); *Antz* (PG); *Star Trek: Insurrection* (PG); *Practical Magic* (12); *Psycho* (15); *Babe: Pig in the City* (U); *The Last Days of Disco* (15); *The Prince of Egypt* (U); *54* (15); *The Siege* (15); *Mulan* (U); *Enemy of the State* (15)

EDINBURGH

ABC FILM CENTRE (0131-228 1638); *Star Trek: Insurrection* (PG); *Enemy of the State* (15); *The Parent Trap* (PG); *Meet Joe Black* (12); *Little Voice* (15); *Antz* (PG); *Star Trek: Insurrection* (PG); *Practical Magic* (12); *Psycho* (15); *Babe: Pig in the City* (U); *Meet Joe Black* (12); *Enemy of the State* (15); *Rush Hour* (15); *Mr Magoo* (PG); *Star Trek: Insurrection* (PG); *The Prince of Egypt* (U); *54* (15); *The Siege* (15); *Mulan* (U); *Enemy of the State* (15)

WARNER VILLAGE (0143-711147); *The Mask of Zorro* (PG); *Little Voice* (15); *Antz* (PG); *Star Trek: Insurrection* (PG); *Practical Magic* (12); *Psycho* (15); *Babe: Pig in the City* (U); *Meet Joe Black* (12); *Enemy of the State* (15); *Rush Hour* (15); *Mr Magoo* (PG); *Star Trek: Insurrection* (PG); *The Prince of Egypt* (U); *54* (15); *The Siege* (15); *Mulan* (U); *Enemy of the State* (15)

WILMINGTON

ABC (01563-525243); *Meet Joe Black* (12); *The Parent Trap* (PG); *Star Trek: Insurrection* (PG); *Antz* (PG); *Psycho* (15); *Babe: Pig in the City* (U); *Meet Joe Black* (12); *Little Voice* (15); *Antz* (PG); *Star Trek: Insurrection* (PG); *Practical Magic* (12); *Psycho* (15); *Babe: Pig in the City* (U); *Meet Joe Black* (12); *Enemy of the State* (15)

CAMEO (0131-228 4141); *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* (18); *Koch Kuch Hota Hai* (PG); *The Acid House* (18); *The Opposite of Sex* (18); *π* (PG); *My Name is Joe* (15); *The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover* (18); *Snake Eyes* (15)

LEEDS

ABC (0113-245 2665); *Star Trek: Insurrection* (PG); *Meet Joe Black* (12); *Little Voice* (15); *Antz* (PG); *Star Trek: Insurrection* (PG); *Practical Magic* (12); *Psycho* (15); *Babe: Pig in the City* (U); *Meet Joe Black* (12); *Enemy of the State* (15); *Rush Hour* (15); *Mr Magoo* (PG); *Star Trek: Insurrection* (PG); *The Prince of Egypt* (U); *54* (15); *The Siege* (15); *Mulan* (U); *Enemy of the State* (15)

LEEDS

VIRGIN (0541-555177); *Practical Magic* (12); *Psycho* (15); *Babe: Pig in the City* (U); *Meet Joe Black* (12); *Little Voice* (15); *Antz* (PG); *Star Trek: Insurrection* (PG); *Practical Magic* (12); *Psycho* (15); *Babe: Pig in the City* (U); *Meet Joe Black* (12); *Enemy of the State* (15)

LEEDS

ODEON (08705-050007); *Star Trek: Insurrection* (PG); *Antz* (PG); *Meet Joe Black* (12); *Little Voice* (15); *Antz* (PG); *Star Trek: Insurrection* (PG); *Practical Magic* (12); *Psycho* (15); *Babe: Pig in the City* (U); *Meet Joe Black* (12); *Enemy of the State* (15)

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LEEDS

ODEON (08705-050007); *Star Trek: Insurrection* (PG); *Antz* (PG); *Meet Joe Black* (12); *Little Voice* (15); *Antz* (PG); *Star Trek: Insurrection* (PG); *Practical Magic* (12); *Psycho* (15); *Babe: Pig in the City* (U); *Meet Joe Black* (12); *Enemy of the State* (15)

THEATRE
COUNTRYWIDE

BIRMINGHAM
THE BILLESLEY HOUSE
Else and Norm's Macbeth Else and Norm perform Shakespeare two-handed at the South Birmingham pub. Thur-Sun, 7.30pm. ends 31 Jan. £6.50-£7. concs available. Brock Lane (0121-494 0953).

BIRMINGHAM REP Two Pianos, Two Hands. British premiere of a musical obsession. Music by J.S. Bach. Fri-Sat 7.30pm. ends 13 Feb. £15-£19. Broad Street (0121-236 4455).

THE DOOR - BIRMINGHAM REP STUDIOS Not Fair! Jim Robinson's one-man play looking at musical obsession. Mon-Fri 7.30pm. ends 13 Feb. £15-£19. Broad Street (0121-236 4455).

BIRMINGHAM REP Two Pianos, Two Hands. British premiere of a musical obsession. Music by J.S. Bach. Fri-Sat 7.30pm. ends 13 Feb. £15-£19. Broad Street (0121-236 4455).

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BLACKPOOL
GRAND THEATRE Lip Service - King Arthur and the Knights of the Occasional Table Comedy duo Maggie Fox and Sue Ryding tackle the famous Arthurian legend. 24 Jan. 8pm. £7. concs £5.

And Then There Were None Agatha Christie's whodunit set in a lonely house on a remote island. 25 Jan. 8pm, 26-30 Jan. 7.30pm. mats 28 & 31 Jan. 2.30pm. £9.50-£12.50. concs available. Church Street (01253-290190).

CROYDON
BELGRADE THEATRE Sleeping Beauty Huge family pantomime. 23 Jan. 2.30pm & 7pm. £8-£14.50. concs available. Corporation Street (01203-553055).

WARRICK ARTS CENTRE Blithe Spirit. Caryl Churchill's comedy double bill deals with family disruption and reunion. 23 Jan. 7.30pm. £8-£14. Gibbet Hill Road (01203-524524).

DUNDEE
DUNDEE REPERTORY THEATRE The Killing of Sister George Comedy of sexual politics centering on the sex of a radio soap star. Tue-Sat, 7.45pm, mat 23 Jan. 2.30pm. ends 30 Jan. £7.50-£12. concs available. Tay Square (01382-223530).

EDINBURGH
ROYAL LYCEUM THEATRE The Deep Blue Sea Terence Rattigan's powerful play about the agony of misdirected desires. Mon-Sat, 7.45pm. 23 & 27 Jan. 2.30pm. ends 6 Feb. £7-£16. concs from £11. Grindlay Street (0131-248 4848).

Glasgow
PAVILION THEATRE Pinocchio The Krankins and Jimmy Cricket deliver a magical pantomime. 23 Jan. 2pm, 25-30 Jan. 7.30pm. 27 Jan. 1.30pm. ends 30 Jan. £6-£9.50. concs available. Renfield Street (0141-332 1846).

RAMSHORN THEATRE Wytchaford Stephen Briggs adaptation of Terry Pratchett's Discworld spin on Shakespeare. Mon-Sat, 7.30pm. ends 6 Feb. £5-£7. concs available. Ingram Street (0141-287 5511).

LEICESTER
HAYMARKET THEATRE Singin' in the Rain High water mark of American musicals. Tue-Sat 7.30pm. mats Wed 9.20pm. ends 6 Feb. £7-£19.50. Belgrave Gate (0116-253 9797).

LINCOLN
THEATRE ROYAL Aladdin or Abanazar's Revenge New version of this Eastern tale with Frazer Hines. 23 Jan. 2.30pm & 7pm. 2.15pm, 5.15pm. £7-£12.50.

NOTTINGHAM
NOTTINGHAM PLAYHOUSE Jack and the Beanstalk Kenneth Alan Taylor writes and directs his 15th consecutive pantomime for Nottingham Playhouse. 23 Jan. 2.30pm & 7.30pm. E9-£12. child £5-£8. East Circus Street (0115-941 5419).

THEATRE ROYAL Dick Whittington Spectacular pantomime starring Lesley Joseph, John Nettles, Jeffrey Holland and Hilary Minster. 23 Jan. 2pm & 7pm. 2.15pm, 5.15pm. £7-£12.50.

LONDON WEST END CHOICE
THE MEMORY OF WATER Alison Steadman, Lorraine Savall and Samanta Bond star in this touching comedy of three sisters returning home for their mother's funeral. Vaudeville Strand, WC2 (0171-836 9987). BR/B Charing X. Mon-Sat 8pm. E8-£10. Waterside (01789-295623).

OLDHAM
COLISEUM THEATRE Dick Whittington Magical adventure on the streets paved with gold. 23 Jan. 2pm & 7.30pm. £10. concs £6. East is East Trial of the children, a Pakistani father and English mother. 23 Jan. 7.30pm. Sat 7.30pm. Fri 8pm. mat 13 Feb. 2.30pm. ends 20 Feb. E5-£10.50. concs £4-£7.50. Fairbottom Street (0161-624 2829).

PERTH
PERTH THEATRE Whisky Galore A ship load of whisky washes up on an Hebridean island. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, mat 23 Jan. 2.30pm. ends 6 Feb. £5-£13. concs available. High Street (01738-621031).

MANCHESTER
OPERA HOUSE Oliver! Gary Wilmet stars in Lionel Bart's Dickensian musical. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Wed & Sat 2.30pm. ends 30 Jan. £10-£29. Quay Street (0161-242 2503).

HALIFAX
SQUARE CHAPEL Pride A coming-of-age tale of pride and prejudice in which the friendliness of three girls is tested to the limit. 26 Jan. 7.30pm. £6. concs £4. Square Road (01422-349422).

THE VIADUCT Twelfth Night Northumbrian accessible production, directed by Alan Ayckbourn. From 28 Jan. Mon-Sun 7.30pm. ends 6 Feb. £10. concs £8. Dean Clough (01422-250250).

HULL
HULL TRUCK THEATRE Unleashed Tom Sturridge's adult comedy about four married men on a weekend trip to Amsterdam. Mon-Sat 8pm. ends 28 Jan. £5-£10. concs available. Spring Street (01482-323638).

NEW THEATRE Aladdin On the Bus 2pm & 7pm. £9.50-£13.10.

THE STUDIO THEATRE The God of Habakuk Story of a young Israeli who goes to a lonely place to find his land. 26-28 Jan. 7.30pm. £6. concs £3.50. Calverley Street (0113-283 5998).

WEST YORKSHIRE PLAYHOUSE: COURTYARD THEATRE PRESENT LAUGHARNE AND MCKEELEN plays temporary residence in Noel Coward's writing studio. An theatrical life. 23 & 28 Jan. 2.30pm & 7pm. £5-£14.50. concs available. Coronation Street (0113-213 7700).

THEATRE ROYAL Romeo and Juliet Shakespeare's classic love story in a faithful production. From 29 Jan. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. ends 13 Feb. E5-£8. concs available. La-dywell Way (0131-665 2240).

MUSSELMOUTH
BRUNEL THEATRE Romeo and Juliet Shakespeare's classic love story in a faithful production. From 29 Jan. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. ends 13 Feb. E5-£8. concs available. La-dywell Way (0131-665 2240).

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE
THEATRE ROYAL Cinderella Popular pantomime with stars from TV's Coronation Street and Eastenders. 23 Jan. 2pm & 7pm. £5-£15. concs available. Grey Street (0115-213 2601).

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME
NEW VICTORIA THEATRE DEAD Funny The great British comedians provide the focus for Terry Johnson's poignant comedy. Mon-Sat 8pm. ends 13 Feb. £6-£10.50. Etruria Road (01782-717962).

WEST YORKSHIRE PLAYHOUSE: QUARRY THEATRE Martin Guerre Bouff and Scherbo's musical love story. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. mats 28 Jan. Thur 7.30pm. mat 13 Feb. £8-£24.

NOTTINGHAM
NOTTINGHAM PLAYHOUSE JACK Singin' in the Rain High water mark of American musicals. Tue-Sat 7.30pm. mats Wed 9.20pm. ends 6 Feb. £7-£19.50. Belgrave Gate (0116-253 9797).

YORK
THEATRE ROYAL BEAUTY AND THE BEAST Berwick Kaler stars in York's fabulous feast of fun. 23, 27 Jan. 2.30pm, 25-28 Jan. 7.30pm. ends 29 Jan. 2.30pm. £5-£14.50. concs available. St Leonards Place (01904-623558).

SWAN THEATRE A Month in the Country Brian Friel's adaptation of Turgenev's classic tale of all-consuming sexual desire. Michael Attenborough directs. 23 & 28 Jan. 1.30pm. £10-£20. The Winter's Tale Seasonal tale of obsessive jealousy directed by Gordon Dornan. 29 Jan. 1.30pm & 7.30pm. ends 27 Feb. £10-£20. Webster's House. 28 Jan. 7.30pm. ends 29 Feb. £10-£20. Waterford (01789-295623).

STRAFFORD-UPON-AVON
ROYAL SHAKESPEARE THEATRE The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe Adrian Noble directs Adrian Mitchell's adaptation of the CS Lewis Narnia classic. 23, 27-29 Jan. 7.15pm. mat 27 Feb. £5-£20. The Winter's Tale Seasonal tale of obsessive jealousy directed by Gordon Dornan. 29 Jan. 1.30pm & 7.30pm. ends 27 Feb. £10-£20. Webster's House. 28 Jan. 7.30pm. ends 29 Feb. £10-£20. Waterford (01789-295623).

STOCKTON ON TEES
ARC Jumping the Waves Gordon Steel's new drama depicts the mixed feelings brought on by a family by an impending marriage. Mon-Thur 8pm. ends 30 Jan. E8-£6. Fri-Sat 9.30-11pm. Mon 2. Mon 1. Dovecot Street (01642-266600).

SCARBOROUGH
STEPHEN JOSEPH THEATRE: MCCARTHY AUDITORIUM Cheap and cheerful A new musical revue written and directed by Alan Ayckbourn. 23, 26-30 Jan. 7.45pm. mat 23 Jan. 2.45pm. £9-£12.50. concs available. Westborough (01723-370541).

SHEDFIELD
CRUCIBLE THEATRE South Pacific. British the winter blues with a visit to this heartwarming Rodgers and Hammerstein musical. 23 Jan. 2.30pm & 7.30pm. £11-£15. concs available. Norfolk Street (0114-276 9922).

THE SELFRIDGE STUDIO SELL OUT Frantic Assembly's multi-media performance. 28 & 29 Jan. 7.30pm. £11-£15. St Anne's Square (0161-683 9833).

LYCEUM THEATRE Boogie Nights Stacey Riche stars in a new 1970s movie. 25-28 Jan. 7.45pm. 29 & 30 Jan. 8pm. £9-£12. concs £5. St Anne's Square (0161-683 9833).

THEATRE ROYAL The Man Who Ate His Boots Experimental Welsh theatre. 30 Jan. 7.45pm. £6. concs £4. Civic Centre (01352-755114).

LEEDS
THE STUDIO THEATRE The God of Habakuk Story of a young Israeli who goes to a lonely place to find his land. 26-28 Jan. 7.30pm. £6. concs £3.50. Calverley Street (0113-283 5998).

THEATRE ROYAL Romeo and Juliet Shakespeare's classic love story in a faithful production. From 29 Jan. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. ends 13 Feb. E5-£8. concs available. La-dywell Way (0131-665 2240).

THEATRE ROYAL Cinderella Jim Davidson directs a family panto for a change, starring Darren Day and Ruth Madoc. 23 Jan. 2.30pm & 7.30pm. 24 Jan. 1pm. £7.50-£15.50. concs available. Oxford Street (0161-242 2525).

THEATRE ROYAL Aladdin Brad Fraser's first time to Silver Man is an exploration of something more than just a pantomime. Mon-Fri 7.30pm. Sat 8pm. Sun 2pm. Wed 2.30pm. 7.30pm. £11-£15. concs available. St Anne's Square (0161-683 9833).

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THURSDAY TELEVISION

BBC1

BBC2

ITV Granada

Channel 4

Channel 5

ITV/Regions

6.00 Business Breakfast (9019). **7.00 News** (T) (6175). **9.00 Kirby** (S) (T) (224165). **9.45 The Vanessa Show** (S) (T) (568127). **10.55 News** (T) (758040). **11.00 Real Rooms** (S) (759086). **11.25 Can't Cook, Won't Cook** (S) (T) (7580545). **11.55 News** (T) (778604). **12.00 Call My Buff** (S) (36312). **12.30 Wipeout** (S) (304286). **12.55 Weather Show** (S) (T) (5583438). **1.00 News** (T) (9138). **1.30 Regional News** (S) (T) (5628445). **1.40 Neighbours** (S) (T) (5654461). **2.05 Inside** (R) (727935). **2.55 Body Spies** (772206).

3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays (R) (S) (229840). **3.45 The New Popeye Show** (R) (T) (5649889). **3.55 Pocket Dragon Adventures** (S) (T) (5655777). **4.05 Rugrats** (R) (S) (T) (6502664). **4.20 Home Farm Twins** (S) (T) (562181). **4.35 Short Change** (S) (T) (206577). **5.00 Newsround Extra** (S) (T) (5650365). **5.35 Grange Hill** (S) (T) (574815). **5.35 Neighbours** (S) (T) (268312).

6.00 News; Weather (T) (913).**6.30 Regional News** (T) (683).**7.00 Watchdog** (S) (T) (9480).**7.30 EastEnders** (S) (T) (867).**8.00 Vets in Practice**. Craig and Alison Beck celebrate their first anniversary in King's Lynn (S) (T) (5429).**8.30 Fat Free** (S) (T) (4935).**9.00 News; Weather** (T) (2795).**9.30 Birds of a Feather**. Christmas Special from 1997 (R) (S) (T) (560428).**10.20 [CHOICE] Omnibus: Mad about Monet**. The life and legacy of the 19th-century Impressionist. See *Choice*, below (S) (T) (49554).**11.30 Question Time** (S) (T) (70556). **12.15 Ice-skating** (S) (19128).**1.00 [FILM] Betrayal of Silence** (1989). Meg Foster uncovers dark secrets in a foster home for teenagers (S) (T) (362610).**2.35 News 24** (2428629). To 6am.

6.35 The Rainbow (T) (294754). **7.00 Open a Door** (R) (210443). **7.05 Teletubbies** (S) (240322). **7.30 Secret Squirrel** (S) (328213). **7.55 Big Peter** (S) (T) (280254). **8.20 Tax-Mania** (S) (632669). **8.40 Police Dog Shorts** (S) (67915). **8.55 Friday Foodie Bird** (R) (S) (777795). **9.05 Job Bank** (S) (763777). **9.30 Belief File** (6053635). **9.30 Watch** (S) (8286567). **9.45 Come Outside** (S) (T) (8614022). **10.00 Teletubbies** (R) (S) (65677). **10.30 Storytime** (S) (640226). **10.45 The Experiment** (S) (678804). **11.05 Space Ark** (S) (626175). **11.15 Zig Zag** (S) (103203). **11.45 Lifeschool** (S) (257193). **12.00 Job Bank** (S) (958886). **12.20 English File** (4549577). **12.30 Working Lunch** (S) (76138). **1.00 Fiddley Foodie Bird** (R) (S) (734519). **1.10 Arts and Crafts Hour** (S) (T) (206072). **2.10 Sporting Greats** (2279428). **2.40 News** (522433). **2.45 Westminster News** (250654). **3.25 News** (375742). **3.25 News** (250654).

3.30 [FILM] A Place for Annie (1993). Sissy Spacek adopts a baby with AIDS in this solemn TV movie (T) (8593).**5.00 Tennis: the Australian Open**.**Semi-final highlights** (S) (3393).**6.00 The Outer Limits**. Classic sci-fi drama series (R) (S) (T) (164374).**6.45 Ice-skating** (S) (57575).**7.30 First Sight** (409).**8.00 The Travel Show**. Juliet Morris visits the Tamworth Snowdon (S) (T) (6770).**8.30 Jeremy Clarkson's Extreme Machines** (R) (S) (T) (2577).**9.00 Meet the Ancestors**. Skeletons are found in a Stone-Age tomb in Orkney (S) (T) (3041).**9.30 Horizon**. How the universe will end? (S) (T) (597774).**10.20 Meetings with Remarkable Lives** (S) (T) (59157). **10.30 Newsnight** (T) (758025). **11.25 Late Review** (S) (T) (736008). **12.00 Dispatch Box** (S) (T) (8160). **12.30 Learning Zone** (46197542). To 6.30am.

6.00 GMTV (366777). **8.25 Trisha** (S) (T) (313004). **10.30 This Morning** (T) (6557867). **12.20 Granada News** (T) (6557867). **12.30 Home and Away** (S) (T) (6557867). **1.00 Pet Rescue** (S) (T) (39184). **1.30 Ocean World of John Stoneman** (S) (357777). **2.00 Earthscape** (5572848).

3.25 Children's ITV: Mopatops Shop (25232). **3.35 The Adventures of Dawdle** (S) (6077954). **3.45 The Sylvester and Tweety Mysteries** (S) (T) (6077160). **4.00 Lavender Castle** (S) (T) (6559346). **4.15 Hey Arnold** (R) (T) (607704). **4.40 Witch Witch** (S) (T) (7681867). **5.10 Home and Away** (S) (T) (3656688). **5.45 News** (105945).

5.55 Granada Tonight (T) (5822041).**7.00 Emmerdale** (S) (T) (1648).**7.30 We Can Work It Out** (S) (335).**8.00 The Bill**. When Garfield volunteers for a weekend at the races, he gets far more than he bargained for (T) (5515).

9.00 The Knock. Cherie Lunghi guest-stars as the glamorous wife of a major drugs dealer. Her husband is in prison, but she has taken over the business and Ancrem and co suspect that she is smuggling heroin into Britain. The trouble is, they have no idea of how she is doing it (S) (T) (5151).

10.00 News; Weather (T) (39409).**10.30 Granada News** (T) (602415).**10.40 Thursday Night Live** (S) (766472).**12.10 Tales from the Darkside** (S) (219500). **12.15 The Spring Show** (S) (T) (752427). **1.30 Pirate TV** (62610). **2.00 Real Stories of the Highway Patrol** (R) (494246). **2.20 Judge John** (943692). **2.45 Pop Down the Pub** (T) (702227). **3.00 Cybernet** (1479516). **4.05 Soundtrax** (2004513). **4.20 TV Nightstream** (T) (8672252). **5.30 Morning News** (60720). To 6am.

7.00 The Big Breakfast (S) (74461). **8.00 Schools** (352481). **11.30 Powerhouse** (T) (6374). **12.00 Sesame Street** (T) (29022). **12.30 Bewitched** (R) (S) (T) (54206). **1.00 Pet Rescue** (S) (T) (39184). **1.30 Ocean World of John Stoneman** (S) (357777). **2.00 Earthscape** (5572848).

2.05 [FILM] Powder River (1993).**Prospector Roy Calhoun becomes the reluctant marshal of a frontier town in this eventful western** (T) (140863).**3.30 Hampton Court Palace** (T) (57).**4.00 Fifteen to One** (S) (T) (664). **4.30 Countdown** (S) (T) (119405). **4.55 Ricki Lake** (S) (T) (430137). **5.30 Pet Rescue** (S) (T) (428).**6.00 Dishes** (T) (11).**6.30 Hollyoaks** (S) (T) (389).**7.00 News; Weather** (S) (T) (45246).**7.55 Music of the Millennium** (38304).**8.00 Norland Nannies**. The trainee nannies go to Wales for a weekend learning endurance skills (T) (6138).**8.30 [FILM] Baby Buttin: A Secret Life**. Investigation into the man known as "The Holiday Camp King" (R) (16583).**9.30 Disobedient**. Why are many British children eating three times the daily recommended level of salt? (T) (67770).**10.00 Rising Dame** (R) (T) (454577). **10.35 Whose Line Is It Anyway?** (S) (T) (28003). **11.05 Ally McBeal** (R) (S) (T) (58319). **12.15 NME Premier Live Show** (S) (T) (5488436). **12.35 Oz** (2453368). **1.40 Vids** (302164). **2.45 Argument in a Superstore** (793455).**2.25 [FILM] Hound-Dog Man** (1959). Fabian plays a footloose backwoods boy in this romantic drama (9558875).**3.55 [FILM] Mardi Gras** (1958). A Pat Boone musical romance (625349).**5.50 The Magic Roundabout** (7321789). **5.53 Animal Alphabet** (7321785). **5.55 Sesame Street** (250500). To 6am.

6.00 5 News (S) (7479225). **7.00 WideWorld** (R) (S) (T) (8574282). **7.30 Mikashel** (S) (T) (5572222). **8.00 Wimble's House** (R) (S) (2990401). **8.00 Havakazo** (R) (S) (1638732). **8.30 Dappledown Farm** (R) (S) (1637003). **9.00 Animal House** (R) (S) (1656833). **9.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show** (R) (6097577). **10.20 Sunset Beach** (S) (T) (2985225). **11.10 Lezzi** (S) (T) (257575). **12.00 5 News at Noon** (S) (T) (6648178). **12.30 Family** (S) (T) (6414248). **1.00 The Bold and the Beautiful** (S) (T) (5973799). **1.30 The Roseanne Show** (F) (S) (843478). **2.00 100 Per Cent Gold** (S) (6834179). **2.30 Good Afternoon** (S) (4026683).

3.30 [FILM] Tokyo Cowboy (1994).**Hirokazu Ito quits his job in Tokyo and moves to Canada to meet his childhood pen-pal** (S) (T) (579374).**5.20 Sunset Beach** (S) (T) (6659003).**6.00 100 Per Cent** (S) (7595428).**6.30 Family Affairs**. Chris visits Nick on his sickbed and shows him Dave's cheque (S) (T) (577940).**7.00 5 News** (S) (6838935).**7.30 Wild Flight**. A film about the Caribbean flamingo (S) (T) (5775664).**8.00 The Pepsi Chart**. Dr Fox presents the latest sounds (S) (T) (6847683).**8.30 Family Confidential**. Complicated story of a Lancashire couple who brought up a mix of six step- and half-brothers and sisters (S) (6526190).**9.00 [FILM] Seeds of Deception** (1994).**It's tears and trauma for two women let down by George Dzundza's dubious sperm-donor clinic. It all ends in court, True-life telesummit with Melissa Gilbert and Shanna Reed** (S) (T) (12585976).**10.50 Hotline** (R) (2683515). **11.25 The Jack Pochette Show** (R) (2683515). **12.05 Live and Dangerous** (S) (S) (819542).**12.45 Live and Dangerous** (S) (T) (7965175). **4.40 Prisoner: Cell Block H** (3421900). **5.30 100 Per Cent** (R) (S) (6096175). To 6am.**Football** (2504587). **1.00 Littlefield** (194587). **8.30 Sunday Football** (2504587). **8.30 Tyneside** (194587). **9.00 Tyneside** (194587). **10.00 Powerhouse** (2504587). **10.30 Powerhouse** (2504587). **11.00 Powerhouse** (2504587). **11.30 Powerhouse** (2504587). **12.00 Powerhouse** (2504587). **12.30 Powerhouse** (2504587). **1.00 Home and Away** (2504587). **1.30 Home and Away** (2504587). **2.00 Emmerdale** (2504587). **2.30 Coronation Street** (2504587). **3.00 Hollyoaks** (2504587). **3.30 Hollyoaks** (2504587). **4.00 Hollyoaks** (2504587). **4.30 Hollyoaks** (2504587). **5.00 Hollyoaks** (2504587). **5.30 Hollyoaks** (2504587). **6.00 Hollyoaks** (2504587). **6.30 Hollyoaks** (2504587). **7.00 Hollyoaks** (2504587). **7.30 Hollyoaks** (2504587). **8.00 Hollyoaks** (2504587). **8.30 Hollyoaks** (2504587). **9.00 Hollyoaks** (2504587). **9.30 Hollyoaks** (2504587

BBC1

- 6.00 Business Breakfast** (27625), 7.00 News (T) (6335), 9.00 *Kirby* (S) (T) (527497), 10.30 *The Vanessa Show* (S) (T) (567017), 10.55 News (T) (750407), 11.00 *Real Rooms* (S) (558442), 11.25 *Can't Cook, Won't Cook* (S) (T) (750407), 12.00 *Tell Me Stuff* (S) (3474), 12.30 *Wipeout* (S) (2008442), 12.55 *Weather Show* (S) (T) (6305794), 1.00 News (T) (63442), 1.30 *Regional News* (6223202), 1.40 *Neighbours* (S) (T) (6592737), 2.05 *Ironside* (R) (7203501), 2.55 *Body Spies* (342382).
- 3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays** (3657686), 3.45 *Enchanted Land* (R) (S) (661249), 3.55 *Hubcap* (T) (2039930), 4.30 *Chimpunks Go to the Movies* (R) (S) (T) (582751), 4.35 *The Really Wild Show* (S) (T) (282133), 5.00 *Newround* (S) (T) (5005882), 5.30 *Grange Hill* (T) (649317), 5.35 *Neighbours* (S) (T) (602565).
- 6.00 News; Weather** (T) (77).
- 6.30 Regional News** (T) (423).
- 7.00 Holiday** (S) (T) (9220).
- 7.30 EastEnders** (S) (T) (807).
- 8.00 Holly City** (S) (T) (371336).
- 8.50 To Paddington Green.** Documentary mini-series (S) (T) (25249).
- 9.00 News; Weather** (T) (2539).
- 9.30 Crimewatch 150.** Special hour-long anniversary edition (S) (T) (5207).
- 10.30 Paddington Green.** Jason falls out with his girlfriend (S) (T) (4417).
- 11.00 Ladies' Night: An Inside Story Special.** Male strippers (T) (679937).
- 11.55 Crimewatch UK Update** (45272).
- 12.05 Film:** *The Honkers* (1972). James Coburn stars as a rodeo rider in this unusual drama (T) (49945).
- 2.00 BBC News 24** (345244). To 6am.

BBC2

- 6.35 Building by Numbers** (4347030), 7.00 *Little Polar Bear* (8893779), 7.05 *Teletubbies* (2572339), 7.30 *Secret Squirrel* (345268), 7.55 *Blue Peter* (2268510), 8.20 *Taz-Mania* (9450588), 8.40 *Poka Dot Shorts* (777717), 8.50 *Oska Dots* (6773328), 8.55 *German Globe* (7600269), 9.30 *Working It Out* (7600268), 9.35 *Tech Sweep* (S) (T) (459084), 3.35 *News* (T) (252452), 3.20 *Granada News* (2201065).
- 3.25 Children's ITV:** *Mopatop's Shop* (251168), 3.35 *Rose and Jim* (S) (6043482), 3.50 *The Wombles* (S) (6039359), 4.00 *Cook and Chicken* (S) (T) (283864), 4.25 *Me and Angelo* (S) (T) (207684), 4.30 *How It Is* (S) (T) (6700330), 5.00 *Home and Away* (S) (T) (6250749), 5.40 *News* (598888), 2.45 *Westminster* (670238), 3.25 *News* (252631).
- 3.30 Film:** *Woman on the Ledge* (1990). Drama (S) (T) (75404).
- 5.00 Tennis – the Australian Open.** The quarter-finals (S) (6133).
- 6.00 Fresh Prince of Bel Air** (900303).
- 6.25 Heartbreak High** (S) (T) (180881).
- 7.10 The O Zone** (S) (T) (948510).
- 7.30 From the Edge** (S) (T) (249).
- 8.00 University Challenge** (S) (T) (6510).
- 8.30 Rick Stein's Seafood Odyssey.** Rick cooks spicy shark vindaloo on a beach in Goa (S) (T) (2317).
- 9.00 Great Railway Journeys.** Chef Rick Stein crosses Mexico on a spectacular rail route from the Pacific to the Atlantic (S) (672201).
- 9.50 Whitbread Live.** Live coverage of the 1998 Whitbread Book Awards from London Brewery (S) (T) (56973).
- 10.30 Newsnight** (766862), 11.45 *Sainted* (700659), 11.45 *Larry Sanders* (16268), 12.00 *Despatch Box* (86447), 12.30 *Learning Zone* (4623338). To 6.35am.

TUESDAY TELEVISION

ITV Granada

- 6.00 GMTV** (630698), 9.25 *Trisha* (S) (T) (310397), 10.30 *This Morning* (T) (6589908), 12.20 *Granada News* (T) (658102), 12.30 *News* (T) (658060), 1.00 *Home and Away* (T) (2821220), 1.25 *Jerry Springer Show* (S) (T) (805324), 2.40 *Coronation Street* (T) (6855220), 2.45 *Supermarket Sweep* (S) (T) (459084), 3.35 *News* (T) (252452), 3.20 *Granada News* (2201065).
- 3.25 Children's ITV:** *Mopatop's Shop* (251168), 3.35 *Rose and Jim* (S) (6043482), 3.50 *The Wombles* (S) (6039359), 4.00 *Cook and Chicken* (S) (T) (283864), 4.25 *Me and Angelo* (S) (T) (207684), 4.30 *How It Is* (S) (T) (6700330), 5.00 *Home and Away* (S) (T) (6250749), 5.40 *News* (598888), 2.45 *Westminster* (670238), 3.25 *News* (252631).
- 3.30 Hampton Court Palace** (97), 4.00 *Fifteen to One* (O4), 4.30 *Countdown* (688), 5.00 *Ricki Lake* (2794), 5.30 *Pet Rescue* (268).
- 6.00 King of the Hill** (R) (S) (T) (861).
- 6.30 Home Improvements.** Tim is thrilled when Randy brings home a girl from school (S) (264539).
- 5.55 Granada Tonight** (T) (8885997).
- 7.00 Emmerdale** (S) (T) (6188).
- 7.30 Origin Unknown.** More UFO mysteries in the North-West (T) (775).
- 8.00 The Bill.** A body in a boat puts Bech and Dale in troubled waters (T) (5355).
- 9.00 Peak Practice.** Dr David's concern for Patricia and her leukemia-stricken daughter leads him into difficulties. His friendship with Patricia, dating back to their childhood, now explodes into a passionate affair (S) (T) (5591).
- 10.00 News; Weather** (T) (20591).
- 10.30 Granada News** (T) (555715).
- 10.40 The Timor Conspiracy.** John Pilger examines the issues surrounding Indonesia's on-going occupation of the Portuguese colony of Timor, 400 miles off Australia (S) (T) (867930).
- 11.40 Renegades** (S) (465133), 12.50 *The Haunted Fisherman* (555184), 1.20 *Highlander* (R) (535228), 1.25 *Planet Rock Profiles* (R) (S) (050737), 2.40 *Wish You Were Here* (S) (T) (747244), 3.05 *Judge Judy* (S) (T) (2600808), 3.20 *Nationwide Football League Extra* (401224), 4.20 *ITV Nightscreen* (T) (8718379), 5.30 *Morning News* (74602), To 6am.

Channel 4

- 6.00 Sesame Street** (0336), 7.00 *The Big Breakfast* (56065), 8.00 *Schools* (70423), 11.30 *Powerhouse* (3442), 12.00 *Sesame Street* (27604), 12.30 *Bewitched* (52688), 1.00 *Pet Rescue* (5152), 1.30 *Roots to Success* (512123).
- 1.50 Film:** *Apartment for Peggy* (1948). Edmund Gwenn stars in this sentimental comedy (S) (151133).
- 3.30 Hampton Court Palace** (97), 4.00 *Fifteen to One* (O4), 4.30 *Countdown* (688), 5.00 *Ricki Lake* (2794), 5.30 *Pet Rescue* (268).
- 6.00 King of the Hill** (R) (S) (T) (861).
- 6.30 Home Improvements.** Tim is thrilled when Randy brings home a girl from school (S) (264539).
- 5.55 Planet Pop** (S) (T) (57782).
- 7.00 News; Weather** (S) (T) (57220).
- 7.50 Music of the Millennium.** With Tania Tikaram (71046).
- 8.00 Brookside.** Niamh, for once, is feeling confident about the future (S) (T) (8978).
- 8.30 Classic Aircraft.** Celebrations of the Lightning, the Silver Sabre, the Vulcan bomber and the F111 (T) (5322).
- 9.00 Station X.** Series about the code-breakers of Bletchley Park (T) (9133).
- 10.00 Father Ted** (R) (S) (T) (28133).
- 10.30 Bob and Margaret** (3788).
- 11.00 Choice: Short Stories.** Two club promoters try to organise an open-air dance event. See *Choice*, below (2274).
- 11.30 Dope Sheet** (8317), 12.00 *Beyond Dope Sheet* (408718).
- 1.40 Film:** *The Emperor of the North* (1973). Lee Marvin stars as a train-hopping hobo in this brutal but intriguing drama (50300485).
- 3.50 Shells** (1493447), 4.00 *Schools* (T) (30466), To 6am.

Channel 5

- 6.00 5 News** (S) (745581), 7.00 *WideWorld* (R) (S) (T) (6520084), 7.30 *Milkshake* (S) (455007), 7.35 *Wimzie's House* (R) (2261097), 8.00 *Havakazo* (R) (S) (6161588), 8.30 *Dappledown Farm* (R) (S) (1801059), 9.00 *Weather Front* (R) (S) (220717), 9.25 *Russell Grant's Postcards* (423626), 9.30 *The Oprah Winfrey Show* (605133), 10.20 *Sunset Beach* (S) (T) (265181), 11.10 *Leesa* (S) (2543807), 12.00 *5 News at Noon* (S) (T) (1604775), 12.30 *Family Affairs* (S) (T) (497404), 1.00 *The Bold and the Beautiful* (S) (T) (593255), 1.30 *The Roseanne Show* (S) (T) (547975), 2.00 *100 Per Cent Gold* (S) (689075), 2.30 *Good Afternoon* (S) (409539).
- 3.30 Film:** *Fear on Trial* (1975). George C Scott stars as American radio star John Henry Faulk, whose career was derailed during the 1950s by anti-communist blacklisting (T) (6166930).
- 5.20 Sunset Beach.** American drama series (S) (T) (6222959).
- 6.00 100 Per Cent.** The game show without a host (S) (571084).
- 6.30 Family Affairs.** Annie demands a cheque from Dave – otherwise she splits the beans (S) (T) (542236).
- 7.00 5 News** (S) (T) (6894591).
- 7.30 Wild Flight.** Series continues with footage of the owls and hawks of North America (S) (T) (5732220).
- 8.00 Perfect Babies.** Mark Easton ends the series by finding out how parents can improve, correct or design their babies in the womb and during the first few weeks of life (S) (T) (5079688).
- 9.00 Film:** *The Rookie* (1990). Clint Eastwood and Charlize Theron star in this police drama (S) (T) (5922949).
- 11.20 Two** (S) (6962233), 12.45 *The Jack Doherty Show* (S) (7902379), 12.55 *Live and Dangerous* (S) (3398362), 3.45 *Asian Football Show* (S) (7156869), 4.40 *Prisoner: Cell Block H* (S) (587755), 5.30 *100 Per Cent* (R) (S) (8055391), To 6am.

ITV/Regions

- Anglia** (An Abramovici example): 12.20 *Local News* (1.30), 13.00 *Country Practice* (1.35), 13.30 *Home and Away* (5526572), 2.00 *Jerry Springer Show* (247813), 3.00 *Local News* (255272), 3.30 *Antique Road Trip* (255273), 4.00 *Postman Pat* (255274), 4.30 *Weather Front* (255275), 5.00 *Worries* (255276), 5.30 *Local News* (255277), 6.00 *EastEnders* (255278), 6.30 *Jerry Springer Show* (255279), 7.00 *Local News* (255280), 7.30 *Postman Pat* (255281), 8.00 *Country Practice* (255282), 8.30 *Home and Away* (255283), 9.00 *Antique Road Trip* (255284), 9.30 *Weather Front* (255285), 10.00 *Worries* (255286), 10.30 *Local News* (255287), 11.00 *EastEnders* (255288), 11.30 *Jerry Springer Show* (255289), 12.00 *Postman Pat* (255290), 12.30 *Country Practice* (255291), 13.00 *Home and Away* (255292), 13.30 *Antique Road Trip* (255293), 14.00 *Weather Front* (255294), 14.30 *Worries* (255295), 15.00 *Local News* (255296), 15.30 *EastEnders* (255297), 16.00 *Postman Pat* (255298), 16.30 *Country Practice* (255299), 17.00 *Home and Away* (255300), 17.30 *Antique Road Trip* (255301), 18.00 *Weather Front* (255302), 18.30 *Worries* (255303), 19.00 *Local News* (255304), 19.30 *EastEnders* (255305), 20.00 *Postman Pat* (255306), 20.30 *Country Practice* (255307), 21.00 *Home and Away* (255308), 21.30 *Antique Road Trip* (255309), 22.00 *Weather Front* (255310), 22.30 *Worries* (255311), 23.00 *Local News* (255312), 23.30 *EastEnders* (255313), 24.00 *Postman Pat* (255314), 24.30 *Country Practice* (255315), 25.00 *Home and Away* (255316), 25.30 *Antique Road Trip* (255317), 26.00 *Weather Front* (255318), 26.30 *Worries* (255319), 27.00 *Local News* (255320), 27.30 *EastEnders* (255321), 28.00 *Postman Pat* (255322), 28.30 *Country Practice* (255323), 29.00 *Home and Away* (255324), 29.30 *Antique Road Trip* (255325), 30.00 *Weather Front* (255326), 30.30 *Worries* (255327), 31.00 *Local News* (255328), 31.30 *EastEnders* (255329), 32.00 *Postman Pat* (255330), 32.30 *Country Practice* (255331), 33.00 *Home and Away* (255332), 33.30 *Antique Road Trip* (255333), 34.00 *Weather Front* (255334), 34.30 *Worries* (255335), 35.00 *Local News* (255336), 35.30 *EastEnders* (255337), 36.00 *Postman Pat* (255338), 36.30 *Country Practice* (255339), 37.00 *Home and Away* (255340), 37.30 *Antique Road Trip* (255341), 38.00 *Weather Front* (255342), 38.30 *Worries* (255343), 39.00 *Local News* (255344), 39.30 *EastEnders* (255345), 40.00 *Postman Pat* (255346), 40.30 *Country Practice* (255347), 41.00 *Home and Away* (255348), 41.30 *Antique Road Trip* (255349), 42.00 *Weather Front* (255350), 42.30 *Worries* (255351), 43.00 *Local News* (255352), 43.30 *EastEnders* (255353), 44.00 *Postman Pat* (255354), 44.30 *Country Practice* (255355), 45.00 *Home and Away* (255356), 45.30 *Antique Road Trip* (255357), 46.00 *Weather Front* (255358), 46.30 *Worries* (255359), 47.00 *Local News* (255360), 47.30 *EastEnders* (255361), 48.00 <i

SATURDAY RADIO

RADIO 1
(97.6-98.6MHz FM)
7.00 Mark Goodier. **10.00** Chris Moyles. **10.00** Lisa Panson. **3.00** Radio 1's R'n'B Chart. **5.00** Judge Jules. **7.00** Danny Rampling - Lovegroove Dance Party. **9.00** Westwood - Radio 1 Rap Show. **12.00** Radio 1 Reggae Dancehall Nite. **2.00** Essential Mix: Carl Cox. **4.00** - **6.30** Annie Nightingale.

RADIO 2
(89.5-90.2MHz FM)
6.00 Mo Dutta. **8.05** Brian Matthew. **10.00** Steve Wrights Saturday Show. **1.00** The Smith Lectures. **1.30** The Newly Discovered Casebook of Sherlock Holmes. **2.00** Alan Freeman. **3.30** Johnnie Walker. **5.30** Paul Gambaccini. **7.00** The American Trilogy. See Pick of the Day. **8.00** Blonde in Concert. See Pick of the Day. **9.00** Suzi Quatro: Rockin' with Suzi Q. **10.00** Bob Harris. **1.00** Lynn Parsons. **4.00** - **7.00** Mo Dutta.

RADIO 3
(90.2-92.4MHz FM)
6.00 On Air.
8.00 CD Review.
12.00 Private Passions.
1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert. (P)
2.00 Best of 3.
3.00 Young Artists' Forum.
4.00 Classic Masterclass.
5.00 Jazz Record Requests.
6.00 Jazz Century.
6.30 Opera on 3. Massenet's operatic version of Goethe's tragic tale of the hopeless love of the young Werther for the married Charlotte. In this performance, Thomas Hampson takes on the mantle of the great Italian baritone Matteo Battistini, for whom Massenet made a baritone arrangement of the tenor title role. Sung in French. With Susan Graham, mezzo (Charlotte); Christopher Robertson, baritone (Albert); Michel Tremont, baritone (Le bailli). Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera, New York/Donald Runnicles. Act 1.
7.35 The James Naughtie Interview. James Naughtie talks to soprano Rebecca Evans, who makes her Met debut this season in Massenet's 'Werther'.

PICK OF THE DAY

THE PROGRAMME that packs more politely appreciative laughter into an hour than any other, *Loose Ends* (10am R4) returns today for a new series. Patricia Hodge and Julian Lloyd Webber help keep Ned Sherrin company in his anecdote.

Music-lovers are well served

tonight: in the first part of The American Trilogy (7pm R2),

Billy Bragg's look at legendary

American solo artists, Bruce Springsteen (right) gives some exclusive insights into his career. It's followed by *Blondie in Concert* (8pm R2).

Later, *Jazz* on 3 (11.30pm) airs a recorded concert which brought together the drummer Louis Mabolo and Lester Bowie, trumpeter with the legendary Art Ensemble of Chicago.

DOMINIC CAVENDISH

7.40 Werther, Act 2.

8.35 The Met Opera Quiz. Thor Eckert Jr puts listeners' questions to opera experts Alison Ames, Joan Dornemann and George Jelinek.

8.45 Werther, Acts 3 and 4.

10.00 The Brains Trust. Joan Bakewell chairs the discussion programme originally launched in 1947 on BBC Radio's Home Service, in which leading minds in the fields of art, science, religion and philosophy debate important intellectual issues. Guests in this programme are novelist Ben Okri, biologist Prof Steven Rose, theologian Angela Tilby and historian Theodore Zeldin.

10.45 Wanderer Trio. Beethoven: Piano Trio in B flat WoO 3.

Saint-Saëns: Piano Trio No 2 in E minor, Op 92.

11.30 Jazz on 3. See Pick of the Day.

1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night.

RADIO 4
(92.4-94.5MHz FM)

6.00 News Briefing.

6.05 Sports Desk.

6.30 Open Country.

6.57 Weather.

7.00 Today.

9.00 Home Truths.

10.00 News; Loose Ends. See Pick of the Day.

11.00 News: The Food Programme.

11.30 From Our Own Correspondent.

12.00 News; Money Box.

12.30 The Ghost of Number Ten.

12.55 Weather.

1.00 News.

1.15 Any Questions? 0870 010 0444.

2.30 The Only Woman Left Behind.

3.00 News; The Saturday Play: The Inheritance.

4.00 News; Weekend Women's Hour.

5.00 Saturday PM.

5.54 Shipping Forecast.

5.57 Weather.

6.00 Six O'Clock News.

6.15 News from London.

7.00 News; Saturday Review.

The cultural events of the week.

7.45 Gerry's Bar. It is opening time again. Join Gerry Anderson for another round of extraordinary tales from ordinary life.

8.00 News; Answering the Call.

Former Zambian president Kenneth Kaunda, who was educated at a mission school, is among those recalling the life and work of British missionaries during the 20th century.

Presented by Colin Morris.

9.00 News; The Classic Serial: Dona Flor and Her Two Husbands. By Jorge Amado, dramatised in three parts by Stuart Morris. 1: No Wake without Rum! In Salvador da Bahia, Brazil, Dona Flor, the youthful and sensuous proprietor of a cooking school, is wooed by the disreputable but utterly charming Vaudim. With Lesley Carvello and Tristan Sturrock.

10.00 News and Weather.

11.30 News; Loose Ends. See Pick of the Day.

12.00 News: The Food Programme.

12.30 From Our Own Correspondent.

12.55 News; Money Box.

1.00 News and Weather.



10.35 Them and Us. Diana Macmillan presents a series which lets you have your say on the current hot topics of the day.

11.00 News; At the Foot of the Mountain. Robert Dawson Scott invites a performer or composer to revisit a major musical challenge.

11.30 Parks and Gardens. (R) 11.00 News.

12.25 Experimental Feature: Still No Truce. The last of three programmes featuring specially commissioned works from the poet and priest R S Thomas. (R)

12.30 The Late Story: The Pear. By Raymond Solylek, read by Billy Boyd. In 1930's Paisley, life is a struggle against poverty and hunger. Jamie Davidson is a streetwise teenager whose political and literary awareness is both a surprise and a threat to his teachers and their authority.

12.48 Shipping Forecast.

1.00 As World Service.

5.30 World News.

5.45 Inshore Forecast.

5.50 - 6.00 Bells on Sunday.

RADIO 4 LW
(198kHz)

12.00 - 12.04 News Headlines; Shipping Forecast.

RADIO 5 LIVE
(69.3-90.5kHz MW)

6.00 Dirty Tackle.

6.30 Breakfast.

9.00 Chiles on Saturday.

11.00 Move It.

11.30 Sick as a Parrot.

12.00 Sportscall.
1.00 Sport on 5. Football: coverage of all the games in the AXA-sponsored FA Cup fourth round, with regular reports from the Tenehers Scottish Cup third round. Rugby Union: Allied Dunbar Premiership matches. Racing from Haydock Park 6.06 Six-O-Six.

8.00 Daily UK. Richard Dallyn with news from around the UK.

9.00 The Treatment. Stuart Maconie and guests review the week's news.

10.00 Late Night Currie. Edwina Currie with the weekend's big issues, including sport in depth at 10.30, and a news briefing at 11.00.

1.00 Up All Night.

5.00 - 6.00 Morning Reports.

CLOCKWISE
(100.0-101.9MHz FM)

6.00 Star Lucas. **8.00** Countdown. **11.00** Masters of Their Art.

12.00 Mike Read. **3.00** Margaret Howard. **6.00** Classic FM at the Movies. **7.00** Smooth Classics at Seven. **9.00** Opera Guide. **10.00** The Classic Quiz. **12.00** Midnight Music. **2.00** Evening Concert. **4.00 - 6.00** Sunday Start.

VIRGIN RADIO
(121.7-127.5MHz FM)

6.00 Mark Forrest. **9.00** Harriet Scott. **12.00** Classic Countdown with Russ Williams. **2.00** Rock and Roll Football. **6.00** Wheels of Steel. **10.00** Janet Lee Grace. **2.00 - 6.00** Steve Power.

WORLD SERVICE RADIO
(198kHz LW)

1.00 Newsdesk. **1.30** Music Review. **2.00** Newsday. **2.30** Agenda. **3.00** World News. **3.45** Sports Roundup. **3.30** World Business Review. **3.45** Letter from America. **4.00** Newsdesk. **5.00** Newsday. **6.00** Women Who Dared to Speak.

TALK RADIO

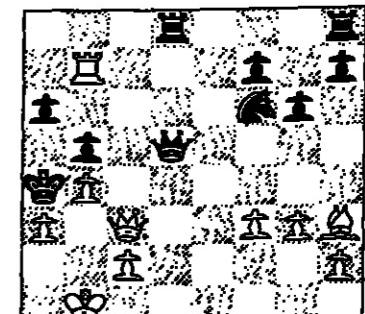
6.00 OK to Talk. **8.00** Danny Baker's Morning Edition. **12.00** Tom Watt's Football Phone-In.

2.00 Saturday Soccer with Richard Keys. **5.05** 505 with Gary Newborn. **7.30** Nancy Roberts. **10.00** Dave Barnes' Phone-In with the Midnight Psychic. **2.00 - 6.00** Mike Dickin.

INDEPENDENT PURSUITS

CHESS

JON SPEELMAN



JUST OCCASIONALLY, a game is played that is so sensational that even in the old days it would have traversed the globe in a week: a game which today, with the proliferation of Internet access, will wing its way within minutes or at most hours to all five continents. Such a one was Gary Kimovich Kasparov's magnificent victory against Veselin Topalov at Wijk aan Zee on Wednesday.

Aesthetic appreciation of chess games is by its very nature subjective. Personally, I go most of all for the unexpected, with a reasonable - but not necessarily excessive - level of violence highly acceptable, good endgame technique to be applauded and a king hunt as in today's game a bonus. Some people also require "absolute soundness" - but I think this is rather prissy - a well contested game is bound to be a bit unclear.

After an admirably provocative opening, Topalov showed faith in his position with 19...d5?!. The storm broke first with Kasparov's splendid 24th and 25th moves - Black couldn't play 25...Qxe7 in view of 26.Qxd4+ Kb8 27.Qb6+ Bb7 28.Nc6+ Ka8 29.Qa7 mate.

Black could have tried to bail out with 28...Qc5 27.Qb6+ Qd6 28.Qd4+ Qe5 but Topalov staunchly advanced his king into the lion's mouth.

If 28...Bxd5? 29.Kb2 with the unanswerable threat of 30.Qb3+ Bxb3 31.cxb3 mate! but the crisis came in the diagram. Now 30...Rd6 loses to 31.Rb6!! Rb6 32.Kb2 but Black's best defence is 30...Rhe8 giving the queen e5 as well as d4 on which to pin after Kb2. After 31.Rb6 Ra8 b2 Ra1! My first thought was 32.Bd6? Rxg6 33.Rxe6 but after Qd7!! 34.Qxc4 Bxc4 35.Rxf6 Kxa2 Black is better.

South opened One Spade and West doubled. Now North had a valuation problem - Two Spades looked feeble, a pre-emptive raise to Three Spades seemed quite wrong - and eventually he settled for no-trumps (ostensibly a genuine raise to Three Spades). Well, he had a possible ruffing value in diamonds and ♠K might be well placed... South bid the spade game and all passed.

West led ♠A against Four Spades and, after inspecting dummy, switched to his singleton trumps. Assuming that ♠A was right, there were still only nine tricks and the only hope lay in some sort of end-play against West so, after drawing the last trump, South led ♠Q. This was good technique - preparing for a diamond ruff and keeping East out of the lead. West won and was able to exit safely with a third diamond. Now, after ruffing on the table, declarer ran off the rest of his trumps. In trouble,

So, what was the possibility that West had missed? On the last trump he could have made the spectacular discard of ♠A! The point is that it is now East who wins with a third diamond. Now, after cashing all his cards on the deal, West came down to ♠K ♠A but declarer had left dummy with ♠A ♠K 7 and now a club lead established two tricks in the suit for him.

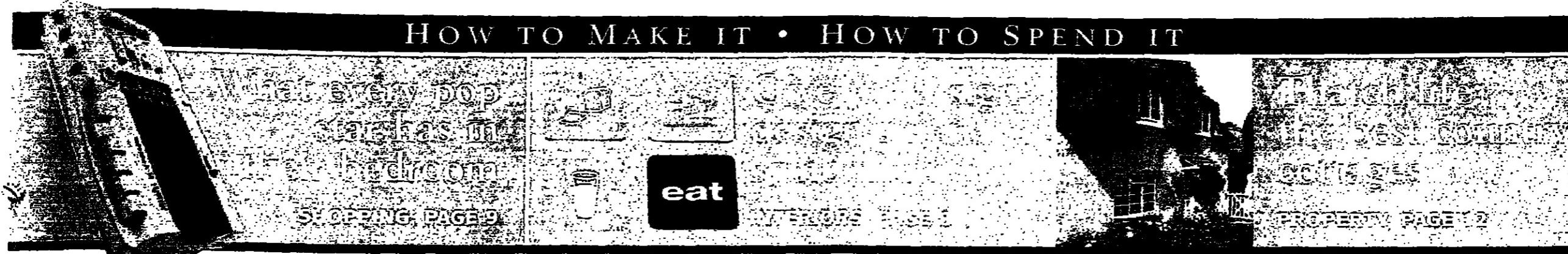
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YOUR MONEY

HOW TO MAKE IT • HOW TO SPEND IT



Not ready to beat the bug

So will your bank be up and running on 1 January, 2000? Paul Slade assesses the chances

Millennium bug experts have hit out at the Financial Services Authority for its "hopeless" performance in facing the industry's Year 2000 compliance programme. They say the regulator refuses to give enough information on progress among the companies it polices and takes too much information on trust.

Robin Guenier is executive director of Taskforce 2000, an independent firm of millennium bug advisers. He says: "The Bank of England said in one of its recent brochures that the FSA doesn't have the technical expertise to judge the readiness of particular banks and financial companies."

"But if they can't go out and check things technically, how can they possibly be a regulator? All they're doing is passing on messages that other people give them, which is hopelessly unsatisfactory."

Speaking at an Action 2000 press conference this week, Michael Foot, of the Financial Services Authority, said: "Our particular focus is on those [companies] with a potential high impact on consumers and markets. The large majority of these are either on track for Year 2000 compliance, or - if behind - are well-placed to catch up on time."

But the FSA refuses to put any concrete figures on these very vague assertions. It will not say what "broadly on track" means, what constitutes a "large majority", how many of a large majority are behind, or how far behind they are.

Andrew Hull, assistant director of Taskforce 2000, says: "A majority could mean 51 per

cent, and you can't draw much reassurance from that. To say a majority are getting on with it may well be true, but we want 99.999 per cent." Pressed on this point, the furthest an FSA spokesman would go was to admit that "a few" companies in its industry are still in the FSA's red zone, which indicates that there is a danger they may not be compliant in time.

Guenier believes many financial services companies are behind schedule in their own compliance work. He says: "They are more advanced than many industries are, but they're not as far advanced as they thought they would be at this time."

Hull adds: "The financial sector is generally more on top of than other sectors. But, conversely, the financial sector is more dependent on technology and more affected by confidence issues. Confidence is all-important, so they need to be ahead."

Another contributor to Thursday's proceedings was Michael Lewis, deputy chief executive of the banks' Association of Payment Clearing Systems. He said: "BACS, which clears salaries, wages, direct debits, standing orders etc, is Year 2000 ready and tested. The cheque-clearing system is also ready and tested, as are Chaps sterling and Chaps euro, which clear high-value same-day payments. We are also confident that cash-dispensing systems will operate normally, with an ample supply of cash throughout the UK."

Guenier says: "I don't really anticipate problems with people's bank accounts, cash machines and so on. The worries are more about the global economy and the inter-relationships banks here have with banks



Many financial firms are way behind on Year 2000 compliance

Phil Dye/SDR

internationally. There are some real concerns."

Another millennium bug study out this week - backed by Taskforce 2000 - warns that 45 per cent of Britain's 1,000 biggest companies have barely begun their own compliance programmes. These companies have yet to complete their inventory of equipment containing embedded microchips, an essential first stage to dealing with any problems.

Julian Stair is a partner at Dibb Lupton Alsop (DLA), a big law firm specializing in Year 2000 issues, which conducted the survey. He says: "How can those companies be confident they will finish on time before they even know what the precise extent of their task is?"

Over a quarter of the companies contributing to the DLA survey (26.7 per cent) are from the financial or business services sectors. One problem in the DLA report is that four out of 10 big companies have failed to appreciate the fact that safety issues alone may be enough to cause real problems.

Your bank may well have its main computers working perfectly. But what good is that if officials have barred staff from the building because the fire alarms are no longer reliable? The Health & Safety Executive has already promised a crack-down on issues like these.

Stair says: "If they have a fire alarm, or a sprinkler system, or a lift which contains embedded chips - all of those things will - then they will have a health and safety issue."

"A significant number of the top 1,000 companies are behind where they should be. They indicated a large degree of confidence that they would be compliant on time, but that confidence may be misplaced."

BARGAIN HUNTER



Property of the week

Scotland for aye

What would £300,000 buy in Hampstead? Perhaps a two-bedroom flat on a not very generous lease. In Scotland, however, your money would stretch to The Rock, an elegant granite country house with an ornamental turret and crow-stepped gables, 10 miles from Aberdeen with its own four and a half acres. There's a 20ft by 13ft reception hall with paneling and doors to the drawing and dining rooms, both of which have very grand domed ceilings and are big enough for serious entertaining. There is a separate less formal sitting room and a study. Upstairs are four bedrooms, dressing room and a bathroom. Outside are a former coachman's house and tennis court. Details from Strutt & Parker (01330 824888).

ROSALIND RUSSELL

Car of the week

Oldies but goldies

CarLand, with used-car superstores at Lakeside Retail Park, West Thurrock, and Airport Business Park, Sheffield, is celebrating its first year of business by offering savings of up to £2,500 on selected cars in a promotion that runs until the end of the month. For example, there's £2,500 off a P-reg Peugeot 406 worth £9,300, £2,000 off an M-reg VW Golf worth £9,500 and £1,500 off N-reg Ford Mondeo worth £7,300. All cars come with one year's free comprehensive insurance.

JAMES RUPPERT

Deal of the week

Tres continental

Savers who think interest rates will continue to fall inexorably to European levels, could take a gamble on Leopold Joseph's Double Up account. It pays 3 per cent gross interest from 1 February; but if UK interest rates continue to fall, Double Up interest will rise by twice the amount by which three-month LIBOR falls (this London money-market rate is currently 5.9 per cent). If UK rates rise, Double Up works in reverse. Minimum investment is £5,000, interest is reviewed and paid quarterly. Call 0171-585 2323 before noon on 1 February.

CLIFFORD GERMAN

Equitable goes to court to protect its lower bonuses

A new financial scandal is waiting to hit the world of annuities. By Teresa Hunter



Jane Austen understood the importance of annuities

ANNUITIES LOOK set to become the latest scandal to rock the insurance world after tumbling international interest rates have left some companies struggling to meet pledges made in more buoyant economic climates. With the sharp eye of a woman, Jane Austen appreciated just how important these innocent little contracts could be. It was Mr Bennet's inadequate annuity which triggered so much scandal, mayhem and romance in his own household.

Some policyholders have accused their insurers of engaging in Wickhamish antics which would have made the cold-blooded Mr Darcy blush.

One company, Equitable Life, has turned to the High Court in an attempt to clear its name and seek legal ratification for its action. A victory could have far-reaching implications not just for pensions, but for a range of life assurance, investment and endowment policies.

The problem has erupted because, in the Sixties, Seventies and Eighties, insurers sold many hundreds of thousands of pension contracts, which were designed for conversion into an annuity at a rate determined at the outset.

The current row has exploded because the industry guessed wrong for a very long time on both accounts. Life expectancy grew faster than predicted, and no one anticipated that gilt yields would plummet, taking annuity rates with them from a peak of 15 per cent in 1991, to their current nadir of about 8 per cent.

Some companies face serious financial consequences if they are forced to meet every guarantee. The Government's pensions guru, the chief actuary, believes a colossal £7bn bill could be winging its way in the industry's direction, dwarfing the fall-out from the high profile pensions mis-selling.

Equitable Life has found itself in the centre of the stage, not only because it sold a large chunk of the business, but because many of its 100,000 policyholders with guaranteed annuities are incensed at the carrot and stick approach it has taken to shore up its position.

As their contracts mature, policyholders are being notified that if they wish to take advantage of the guaranteed annuity rate, they can. But they must expect to earn a lower investment return as a result. This effectively neutralises the

regular payments to the policyholder until he or she dies.

Insurers use two factors to decide how much to pay by way of an annuity. One is gilt yields, which reflect underlying interest rates, and the other is life expectancy. Getting the sum right is crucial to avoid making very costly mistakes.

FREE NAP SHARE TIPS FOR 1999

Every year high-flying technology shares make big profits for those in the know. Just look at recent stunning gains by the likes of Gresham Computing, Kewill, London Bridge Software and Sherwood International. Each doubled and more within the last 12 months. Or how about the huge advance in video compression software outfit Eidos. At one point last year the shares were showing a gain of 7800% on their 1993 low.

All were tipped in Techinvest - the only newsletter dedicated to helping investors make money from the technology sector of the London stockmarket. Every month subscribers - including institutions, analysts and private investors in 48 countries - are told what to buy, hold and sell in this exciting sector.

Average Gain of 73%

Every year the January issue gives our nap tips for the coming year. The results for the past eight years are shown below (mid-market prices at time of December issue).

Year	Gain%
1991	71.6
1992	21.0
1993	183.7
1994	11.9
1995	226.2
1996	8.5
1997	45.3
1998	17.5
Eight year average : 73.2%	

The current January issue contains our nap selections for 1999. For a FREE copy and details of introductory discount offer, send your name and address to: Dept IN, Techinvest, 14 Herbert Street, Dublin 2, Ireland

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INSIDE

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Brian Tora

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5 Motoring

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10 Hot spot: Shoreditch

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It reduces grown men to tears – but self-assessment is here to stay. And in fact it's not that bad. Take a tip from Sara Williams

Tax returns: your worries solved

It's that time of year again – when the Inland Revenue's new regime looms large on the horizon. But don't worry; we have the answers to all your questions

Q: When do I have to get the tax form in?

A: The rule is that the form has to be in the hands of the Inland Revenue on 31 January (a Sunday). The Revenue says that if your form is in their office when first thing Monday morning, then it's on time. If it's not there, it's late. So be certain to post it first-class, probably on Thursday 28 January.

A lot of tax offices will be open on Saturday or Sunday depending upon staff agreeing to work. Details should be in the local press, or phone up your local office to find out if you can drop it in by hand.

Q: What do I have to get to the Inland Revenue?

A: You have to send in your completed tax return for the previous tax year (1997/8), plus the tax calculation and a cheque for the amount of unpaid tax you have worked out that you owe the Revenue.

You will also have to make your first interim payment of tax for the current tax year

1998/9 (you should have received a Statement of Account telling you how much that is).

Q: If I don't get my tax return in on time, what are the penalties?

A: You will face an automatic £100 penalty plus interest on your unpaid tax bill. If you still haven't paid your tax by 28 February, you will also face an interest surcharge of 5 per cent of tax owed but not paid.

Q: Is it too late to start completing my tax return?

A: No. You should still be able to get it completed on time. Start now by finding out whether you have got all the forms you need. If you are missing any you can get them by phoning the Inland Revenue Orderline on 0645 000 404. You should also start gathering your documentation together, such as Form P60, certificates of interest paid for your mortgage, share dividend counterfoils and so on. You may need to ask your bank, building society, pension company and so on for particular information.

Q: How long a job is this going to be?

A: It's difficult to say how long it will take you to get your documentation together. But once you start filling in the form with all your documents to hand – and with the right attitude – it shouldn't take much longer than a couple of hours.

Q: Is my form going to be checked by anyone?

A: Yes. The first thing that happens is that the tax officer transfers figures into the computer to highlight arithmetic and simple errors. However, if the figures all add up, it won't be obvious that it is incorrect.

By law, you are required to notify your tax inspector of any income or capital gains not previously declared within six months of the end of the tax year in which you make the income or gain. While it won't be apparent in your tax return if you have failed to do this, the Revenue can make an inquiry into your self-assessment return. Last year, around 45,000 taxpayers were notified that this was going to happen, some 8,000 of them chosen completely at random. This year it could be you...

If you have got your tax return wrong, you have a year to make a correction (ie by 31 January 2000) without anything terrible happening.

Q: What mistakes should I try and avoid?

A: There are some pretty obvious ones. Common mistakes include failing to sign and date the return, attaching pieces of paper with additional information instead of putting it directly on the return, failing to ask for a repayment of tax when one is due and failing to send in a supplementary page which is required.



Not quite the London Dungeon, but the Inland Revenue's bicentennial exhibition was scary enough Mykel Nicolaou

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Radar for the stockmarket



**INTERNET
INVESTOR**
ROBIN AMLÔT

BRITAIN'S BIGGEST private client stockbroker took a step closer to unveiling its Internet dealing service this week. Barclays Stockbrokers has been running trials of its online trading system internally for months. And now members of the MoneyWorld Club are being offered the opportunity to help pilot the system.

Barclays Stockbrokers, unlike many other services – whether online or phone-based – is not insisting that you establish a nominee account to use the service. It is specifically designed for those of us who still like to hold shares in our own names and hold on to our share certificates. The service allows you to trade by simply inputting what stocks you are interested in, and in what quantity.

Based in Glasgow, the service receives this information and offers a price, which you have 15 seconds to decide on. It offers firm prices, immediate execution and confirmation of orders online.

Philip Bunney, the research and development director, says: "We also run our quotes through an improvement system, which has proved to get a better price 50 per cent of the time." This "price improver" system is exclusive to Barclays Stockbrokers. Through direct links to the major market makers, in addition to the Stock Exchange, it is designed to identify the most competitive price available. Tom Sheridan, the managing director of Barclays Stockbrokers, describes the service as "like a new radar for the stockmarket".

MoneyWorld, one of the UK's top personal finance websites, also relaunched itself with a new look this week. The design is more graphics-heavy than the old look and, thus, a little slower to access, although I am told this problem is being addressed. The site has 155,000 regular users and 40,000 club members. Only club members may access the Barclays service. However, since club membership is free and registration for the share-dealing service is also free, this is no great barrier. The pilot scheme is scheduled to run for around three months before Barclays Stockbrokers takes it fully public.

So what does it cost? Internet dealing in the UK is not yet as price-sensitive as online broking in the US. Barclays is charging a minimum of £17.50 and 1.5 per cent on the first

£5,000, with stamp duty on top. This is not the cheapest way to deal, but dealing online does make personal portfolio management an easier task.

Moving on, let us note a couple of other signs of the times. In the US this week, Delta Airlines introduced a surcharge of \$2 per ticket on all air tickets that are not purchased through the Internet. Delta thus appears to have served notice not only on travel agents at large but also on call centre staff.

And if you have always fancied bidding at auction for an Old Master but have not got round to making it to the auction rooms in London and New York, you won't have that excuse for much longer. Sotheby's is investing £15 million over the next 12 months in developing Internet-based auctions. So rampant has Internet fever become on the New York Stock Exchange that, on the day of the announcement, the auction house's share price jumped by 16 per cent. Sotheby's first online auction is due to take place early in the summer.

Finally, thank you to everyone who e-mailed me to point out the gaffe in last week's copy. Directline is not a subsidiary of HSBC. The bank's online facility is, of course, based on its First Direct brand. This was not a competition and there are no prizes!

MoneyWorld:
www.moneyworld.co.uk
Sotheby's: www.sotheyes.com

Robin can be reached at Robin.Amlot@aol.com

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Investors scrambling to buy Internet-related shares should be prepared for burnt fingers

Too high with no safety net

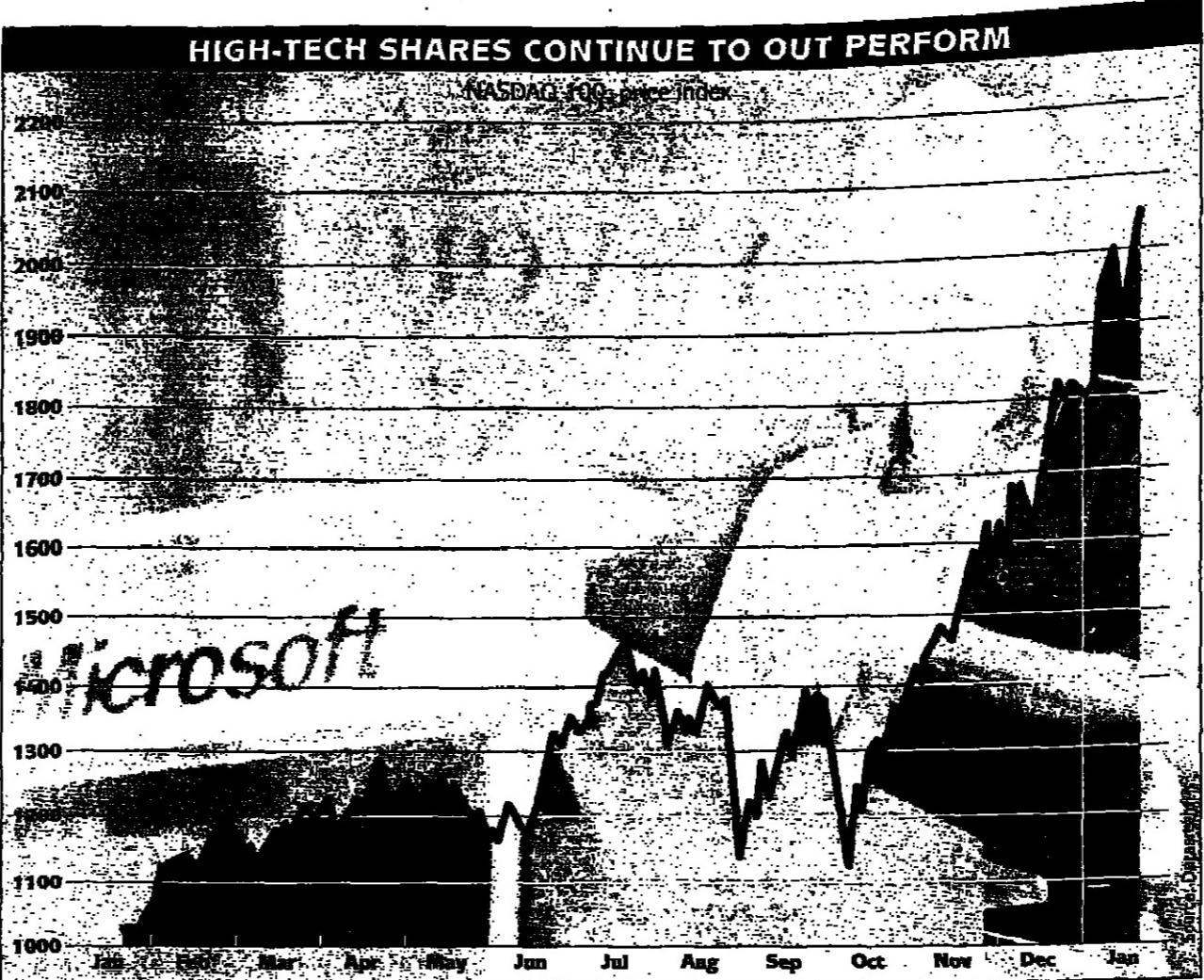
ONE OF the things that has always intrigued me about the stock market is how two people can interpret the same observable situation in quite such diametrically opposed ways. In many areas of life, it is often difficult to reconcile the views of a chronic optimist and a confirmed pessimist, and all markets depend to varying degrees on the existence of participants with different perspectives. Difference is what makes the market mechanism work so well and defines its great appeal although, as Galbraith observed, one of the great mysteries of economics is why, in a market system, there should be a buyer for every seller.



JONATHAN DAVIES

Anything with the word 'net' or the suffix .com seems to go stratospheric

But saying markets thrive on a variety of opinion is one thing, explaining the huge dispersal in sentiment in the stock market at any one time is quite another. Not least because, in principle, there is no mystery about how companies or markets should be valued. The theory of how value shares has been out since at least the 1930s when an American called J B Williams first enunciated the principles of security valuation. He laid out for all to see how the value of a share (or a market) can be derived by discounting the expected future stream of dividends or earnings at an appropriate rate of interest (the discount factor).



memories are prone to point out, anything with the word net or the suffix .com associated with it seems to be valued immediately these days on a stratospheric earnings multiple, just as any company with a whiff of electronics about it was in the late 1960s. It is not just in New York that the phenomenon can be seen. On the London stock market, a tiny company called On-Line, which makes a computer submarine game for the Internet, saw its shares jump by 60 per cent on Wednesday not because of any change in its trading performance, but purely on the strength of its involvement in the Internet. The shares have now risen more than 10-fold in two weeks! Another company, Netcall, said it had no knowledge of why its shares had jumped 40 to 50p before lunch. There are many other examples. Dixons and even W H Smith are benefiting from the surge in Internet mania.

All the signs are that the market is seeing in Internet stocks the start of a classic speculative bubble. It is certainly reminiscent of the late 1960s, when electronics was the big buzzword and any company with the suffix -tronics was valued at 50 or even 100 times its current earnings (assuming that it had any earnings, which was far from certain, just as with today's Internet stocks).

The fact is that you have to plug in some highly optimistic projections in order to arrive at a value for many of these companies which is even remote, justifiable on the basis of a Williams-style valuation equation. In one or two cases it will be justified - there is no doubt that the Internet is a growth business, and one day some companies will make a lot of money from it - but there won't be many, and it is far from certain that out there in cyberspace is the next Microsoft waiting to make investors a long term fortune. The Internet is a very competitive place to do business, and entry barriers are

These Internet shares cannot be worth the value put on them in today's feverish stock market

low. Just as certain is that many hot stocks of today will end in disaster, leaving behind the smell of charred fingers.

Many professional investors know that these valuations are absurd but momentum investing (if it moves, buy it) has not been as prevalent as it is today for a long time. The implicit rationale behind those who are buying Internet shares today, despite their stretched valuations, is the confident belief that they will be able to take their profits and get out of the shares before the bubble bursts. That is fine as far as it goes - except for the uncomfortable fact that by definition not everyone can hope to get out alive. Someone must be left holding the baby.

The search engine company Excite was valued at nearly \$4bn (\$2.4bn) in a bid from a telecoms company called At-Home this week, and it is only one of the secondary players in that segment of the market, after Yahoo and Netscape. Yahoo now has a market capitalisation greater than General Motors, the largest carmaker in the world, and carries the distinction of being one of the few Internet companies which have actually made a profit - although it was only last year that this happened.

In fact, as those with long

memories will know, it is

**Mortg
flexi**

Switching to flexi

CUT YOUR MORTGAGE

Fee Index-Tracking PEP

*Source: Micropal LGIM, on an offer to bid basis based on all PEP charges with gross income re-invested from 01/95 to 01/99. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. From 01/95 to 01/99 six credits on UK dividend distributions will only be able to be reclaimed by PEPs at a reduction rate of 10%. Both capital and income values may go down as well as up and you may not get back the amount invested. All comparisons of costs apply to PEPs investing wholly in unit trusts. Full written details are available on request. All statements are correct as at 01/01/99. The Government have announced that contributions can only be made to PEPs until April 1999. From that date a new tax-privileged savings vehicle, the Individual Savings Account (ISA) will be available. Legal & General (Direct) Limited is registered in England No. 2702800 Registered Office: Temple Court, 11 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4N 1TY. Representative only of the Legal & General marketing group members of which are regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and IMRO for the purposes of recommending, advising on and selling life assurance and investment products bearing Legal & General's name.

A glance at the table will show you how the

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BEST INVESTMENT is offering readers a free copy of Spot the Dog 99, their annual guide to poorly-performing PEP funds, as well as a free review of investors' own portfolios. Call 0990 112235 for details.

GUARANTEED BOND rates continue to fall, and brokers Baronsworth are encouraging investors to consider other low-risk investments - ie with-profit bonds. If you are interested, call 100 and ask for Freephone Bondline for comparative guides.

NEVILLE JAMES, another market maker in traded endowment policies, is offering with-profits policy-holders a free valuation to establish current market values. Policy-holders who need to dispose of their policies can see if they would do better to sell rather than surrender the policy, and those who want to hold on can see whether their policies are likely to pay off the mortgage when it becomes due.

COULD IT be that a new source of money to chase the US market even higher has been found? It seems that Bill Clinton wishes to invest welfare funds that provide pensions for public servants and the poor in the stockmarket to improve returns received.

Nice idea Bill, but you appear to have upset Alan Greenspan, the influential chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank, which is never a good move. And it remains to be seen how Congress would treat such a suggestion.

There is more than a whiff of political manoeuvring in this. The stockmarket is being driven upwards by the baby boomers, anxious to save for their retirement. Bill Clinton is a baby boomer himself, so encouraging people to believe they are doing the right thing already and that there will be more money in the pot for when they retire will not be doing him any harm with middle America.

It is, though, very worrying from the point of view of what it could do to valuation levels. Although the amount of extra money the government is likely to wish to invest in the stockmarket will be significantly less than the current flow into mutual funds, there could be a marginal effect driving values still higher. Remember, this week the price earnings multiple on which UK stocks stand hit an all time high.

The trouble with bubbles is that, when they burst, it can be rather unpleasant. The suggestion made by the US President seems to be that, providing we can find enough air, the balloon can keep inflating. This seems to me to be naivety to the point of recklessness, but maybe the imbalance between supply and demand does mean that we will have to get used to higher valuation levels on shares. There is no historical reason to believe that how shares are valued has to be determined by what has gone on before. Still, it



BRIAN TORA

Clinton seems to think that, if we find enough air, the balloon can keep on inflating

feels uncomfortable when you move into uncharted waters, even if your heart tells you that this year's extravagant rating will turn into next year's valuation norm.

Unfortunately, what was a re-rating based on investment returns is turning into a valuation base that owes more to availability than real prospects.

Pension funds necessarily have to invest. By and large their liabilities extend over a number of years - and for a variety of people who are living longer. Whether or not it is right to divert welfare funds into the stockmarket, the fact remains that money is becoming available for investment at a time when opportunities are, if anything, contracting. I find this the only justification for markets to be at the level they are.

In Japan when this happened, the bubble did burst and Mrs Satowabane took to keeping savings in a sock. Deflation would make this a sensible investment move, but the developed world needs a healthy stockmarket. So Dave from Denver will probably be deterred from cramming dollars into his Doc Martens - even if Bill from Washington fails in diverting cash from Treasury bonds to Mutual Funds.

Brian Tora is the Chairman of the Greig Middleton Investment Strategy Committee

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There's no free lunch

An investment may save on tax, but is it right for you? By Rachel Fixsen

No one likes paying tax. And when the Inland Revenue takes a hefty chunk out of your investment returns, it can be demoralising. So any investment which can claim to be tax-efficient, or better still tax-free, has instant appeal.

In the state's attempts to influence the public's saving patterns, a host of tax-free investments have been pushed our way. These include Personal Equity Plans (PEPs) and Tax-Exempt Special Savings Accounts (Tessas) – soon to be replaced by Individual Savings Accounts (ISAs) – and a variety of pension plans.

No one should invest in something purely because of its tax status. Just because an investment sports the "tax-free" label, does not mean it is necessarily a good choice.

"But it's silly not to take up your entitlements of those (PEPs, Tessas). If you would have chosen those investments anyway," says Peter Smith of independent financial advisers Hill Martin.

PEPs have been a huge success story since they were launched in 1991. Investors have built up impressive equities portfolios by steady monthly contributions coupled with the tax-free benefits.

"For investments such as PEPs, going into a unit trust directly when you haven't used your PEP allowance does not make sense," says Kevin Minter, financial planning manager at independent financial advisers, the David Aaron Partnership.

If a couple had invested £2,000 in the Gartmore UK Index unit trust five years ago without using the PEP wrapper, that investment would now be worth a net £22,655. If they had used their PEP allowance, the same investment would be worth £23,570.

However, in some cases the difference could be even more pronounced. A few providers actually have lower charges on PEPs than they do on the underlying unit trust. Fierce competition in the PEP market is



Richard Branson's Virgin is at the forefront of the new breed of tax-free investments

part of the reason for this. Fund managers are also keen to attract PEP funds, because these do not tend to move as much as money invested in standard unit trusts, says Peter Smith.

Sometimes certain tax-saving investments are not a particularly bright idea. "Tax-efficiency is a cornerstone of financial planning, but you do

want to lock your money away

for five years, there may be better places to lodge it."

Single-company PEPs can also work out more expensive than holding the same shares outside the tax-free wrapper.

"For the basic-rate taxpayer, there are a lot of single company PEPs where the management charge can be equal

to or greater than the tax savings," says Mr Minter.

Last year, the yield on the FTSE – the average dividend paid by the country's 100 biggest companies – was about 3 per cent. So the tax saving afforded by the PEP shelter would be 0.6 per cent. However, charges levied on a single company PEP can be 1 per cent or

more, while charges on a standard unit trust might be as low as 0.75 per cent.

need to be looking at the actual returns you are getting," says Mr Minter. Tessas pay tax-free returns on cash deposits – subject to rules. "With interest rates falling over the next five years, even with the gross return, it might not be very attractive. Anyone taking out a Tessa now might end up with between 5 and 6 per cent gross interest on average. But if you

to or greater than the tax savings," says Mr Minter.

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more, while charges on a standard unit trust might be as low as 0.75 per cent.

PEPs, Tessas and National Savings are not the only tax-

free investment opportunities. For more sophisticated investors, Venture Capital Trusts and Enterprise Investment Schemes (EIS) offer tax breaks – but the risk is high.

Personal Pension Plans are long-term investments and can keep huge amounts of money from falling into the hands of the Inland Revenue. For someone who has no access to an occupational pension scheme, personal pensions do normally make sense as a way of building up a retirement income. But many pensions currently available are poor because of their charges, or because they are too complicated to understand.

Also, money invested is locked away until at least the age of 50. "If you're young, there's a big postponement going on," says Peter Smith.

This is why there is a need for other types of investment to save for retirement, he says.

When it comes to selling the investment, there can be problems since there is often no secondary market as the purchaser will not get tax relief.

Anyone investing in an EIS or VCT should first ask themselves how happy they would be with that investment if no tax relief were available.

Hill Martin, 0171 233 2777; David Aaron Partnership, 01908 231544

So what is the truth about ISAs?

A new investment system is set to replace PEPs and Tessas in April. By Rachel Fixsen

Q: What is an ISA?

A: ISAs, or Individual Savings Accounts, are the new tax-free shelters for savings and investments. They will replace the existing system of Personal Equity Plans (PEPs) and Tax-exempt special savings accounts (Tessas). No income or capital gains tax is payable on the investments held in an ISA.

Q: When do they start?

A: On 6 April this year.

Q: What can I invest in an ISA?

A: Cash deposits, stockmarket investments and life insurance. The cash part could include bank and building society savings accounts, money market deposits, cash unit trusts and National Savings plans. Among investments allowed in the stockmarket part are listed shares, unit trusts, investments trusts, corporate bonds and government stock.

Q: How will it work, exactly?

A: As with PEPs and Tessas, financial services providers such as Abbey National or Marks & Spencer Financial Services will offer a range of ISAs. There are basically two types of account – maxi ISAs and mini ISAs.

Maxi ISAs can be used to hold all three types of ISA investment, and a single provider administers the whole lot. You do not have to hold all three types in a maxi ISA, but it must at least contain the stockmarket component.

A mini ISA is made up of just one component. You could go to a different provider for each component of your ISA, by having three mini ISAs.

Q: What will happen to my PEPs when ISAs supersede them?

A: After 5 April, you will not be able to invest in a new PEP or Tessa. If you already have a PEP that investment will continue to exist until you cash it in, although you will not be able to invest any new money in it after 5 April.

Q: When do they start?

A: On 6 April this year.

Q: What about my Tessa?

A: If you already have a Tessa, you can carry on subscribing to it until it matures. Then you can transfer the capital, but not the interest, to an ISA. It can either be transferred into a cash component of a maxi ISA, to a cash mini ISA or a Tessa-only ISA.

Q: How much can I invest?

A: In general, you cannot invest as much in an ISA as you could in PEPs and Tessas. Limits are higher for 1999/2000 – the first year that ISAs will exist. Up to £7,000 can be invested in equities and bonds, up to £3,000 in cash and £1,000 in insurance. After that, the annual limits will be £5,000, £1,000 and £1,000 respectively.

Q: How long do I have to tie my money up for?

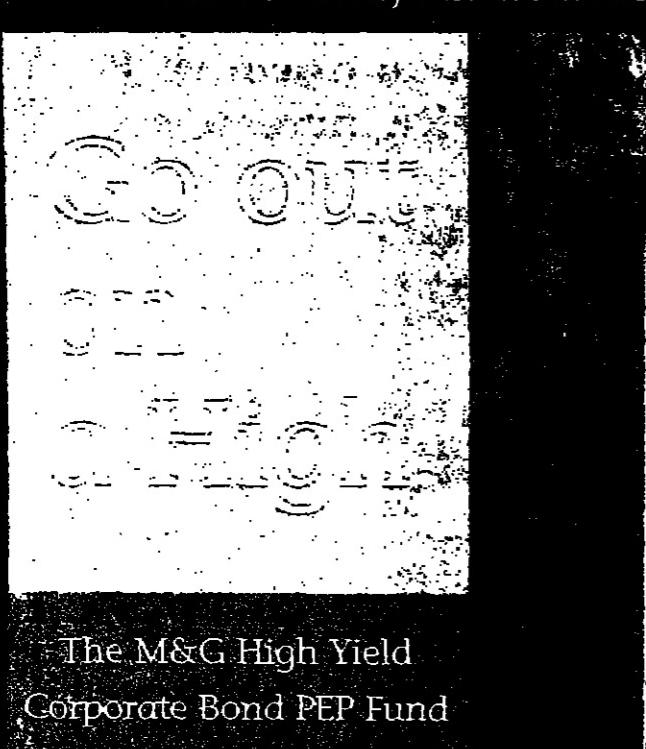
A: Unlike Tessas, where the capital has to be invested for five years for the interest to be tax-free, there is no lock-in period with ISAs. But providers will have their own terms. For instance, some may only give their best rates on investments that remain in place for a minimum length of time.

Q: Can anyone have one?

A: As long as they are over the age of 18, and resident in the UK for tax purposes.

*Estimated gross distribution gross income reinvested and redemption yield 7.5% per annum as at 11.12.98. Estimated yields will vary and end up to date figures are available on request or the number below. **The dealing spread was 0.85% as at 11.12.98. The M&G High Yield Corporate Bond Fund is managed by M&G Securities Limited (regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and FMDR). M&G do not offer investment advice or make any recommendations about investments. We only promote the packaged products and services of the M&G marketing group. The tax regime of PEPs and ISAs may change, and the value of the tax benefits will depend on the individual circumstances of the investor. The provider and the income from the fund go to the provider, not to the individual. Gross income is the amount of income before deduction of tax and other expenses. The provider is M&G Financial Services Limited (regulated by the Personal Investment Authority), M&G House, Victoria Road, Cheltenham GL1 1FB.

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Dividend cut is in pipeline for PEPs

THE AMOUNT of dividend income you can receive from personal equity plans (PEPs) is going to be cut from 6 April because of tax changes introduced in the last budget.

This applies as much to investment and unit trusts as it does to shares in British companies that are held in a PEP. The change will also affect equity income from the government's new Individual Savings Account.

From 6 April the 20 per cent tax credit on dividends that PEP managers reclaim and reinvest or distribute will be reduced to 10 per cent of any dividend. This reduced rate will be finally

phased out on 6 April 2004.

At present, for every £100 of dividend income from a PEP, the same "unpepped" investment would pay £28 net to a basic-rate taxpayer and just £6 to a high-rate taxpayer. After next April, the amount you receive from a PEP or ISA will fall to just £28.80.

The dividend payable to basic- and high-rate taxpayers will remain the same. Corporate bonds deemed to pay interest not dividends have 20 per cent basic-rate income tax deducted at source, but if held in a PEP or ISA this can be reclaimed if at least 40 per cent is invested in corporate bonds.

IAIN MORSE

Friendly face of investing

Small is still beautiful for five million people. By Andy Couchman

INVESTING TODAY through a friendly society tax-exempt savings scheme can save up to £25 a month or £270 a year. Even at today's 20 per cent tax rate, that's quite an advantage.

Friendly societies were popular until the welfare state took over many of their responsibilities in 1948. However, they still have about five million members, attracted by the benefit of mutuality - there are no shareholders, which means that profits can be reinvested back to benefit policyholders.

Some 30 societies offer tax-exempt plans, and both unit-linked and with-profits plans are available. With their built-in tax advantage, they should offer a better deal than traditional endowments, but that depends on their charges and investment performance. Tunbridge Wells Equitable Friendly Society (Twefs), Scottish Friendly Society and Teachers Provident have all featured well in recent with-profit surveys.

From April, up to £1,000 a year may be invested in the life assurance element of an ISA, the Government's new individual savings account, and some societies are planning to launch their own versions. Societies lose some of their advantages from April, paying 10 per cent tax on dividends received for five years and full tax thereafter. That is likely to cut investment yields by 0.5 per cent a year. Even so, friendly societies may

still be attractive for regular long-term savings.

Choosing the right policy

1. Look at past performance. While not infallible, a consistent record over a number of years indicates good investment management. Ignore comparisons with unlike investments such as building societies.
2. Ask to see independent evidence of how they compare to other endowment savings plans. Be wary of larger societies that do not take part in performance surveys carried out by magazines. They may have something to hide.
3. From April, check whether an ISA may offer better value.
4. Beware short track records.
5. Remember that you can invest only up to £25 a month or £270 a year into friendly society savings plans.
6. Friendly societies, as one of the few homes for small monthly savings, are good places to save for a child.

To find out more about friendly societies, the Association of Friendly Societies (AFS) publishes *Making Friends With Your Friendly Society*. The booklet contains details of the major societies, together with useful background information. The association can be contacted on 0171 606 1881.

The writer is the publishing editor of HealthCare Insurance Report

Venture into a different world

Venture capital trusts may be volatile, but the investor is compensated by attractive tax breaks. By Iain Morse

THE GENEROUS tax breaks available if you buy shares in small and growing companies through a venture capital trust (VCT) are good news for anyone who has used up their PEP allowance and still has spare cash to invest. But VCTs are not directly comparable to PEPs. While PEP funds can only buy and sell shares listed on our main Stock Exchanges, VCTs are not allowed to do so.

Instead, they can only buy shares in unlisted companies, or those with shares traded on the Alternative Investment Market (AIM). By definition, these types of share are "illiquid"; they have no ready, predictable market value. Hence they are also riskier than shares traded on the Stock Exchange.

This means that VCTs are inherently volatile. They give a greater chance of gain or loss than more mainstream retail investments. On the other hand, they carry more generous tax breaks than PEPs. You can invest up to £100,000 each tax year qualifying for four generous tax breaks, two on income and two on capital gains.

All dividend income from VCT shares is tax free. If buying a new issue, you can claim back income tax relief of 20 per cent on the amount you invest. All capital gains on VCTs are

also tax free. Again, if subscribing to a new issue, you can roll over and defer any liability for capital gains tax made from the sale of shares or other assets by re-investing the gain into a VCT.

This applies to any gains arising within 12-month periods on either side of your VCT investment.

The only problem is that in order to qualify for two of these tax breaks - the 20 per cent rebate and CGT rollover - you must own the VCT for at least five years. This can be a problem because of the inherent risk in this type of investment.

VCT fund managers are bound by tight rules and regulations; no more than £1m per tax year can be invested into the shares of any one company, which itself must not have net assets worth in excess of £10m. These investments cannot be "asset backed". This rules out the purchase of shares in property-owning companies, or other "guaranteed return" investments.

But if a company becomes insolvent, or unable to pay its trade creditors, then shareholders rank last in priority on any wind-up. So, after any bank loans have been repaid, a VCT fund may receive nothing for the value of its shares.

The VCT sector is small by comparison to others, with an estimated £500m total funds under management, split among only 12,000 investors. By comparison, total funds

contacts in their management team. Oxford deals exclusively with information technology and hi-tech startups in and around Oxford itself.

Generalist trusts - such as Downing's Classic - tend to be larger, with management teams coming from a background in making venture capital deals. Look out for managers who have worked with 3i, or the mainstream small company unit and investment trust sector. Look out also for VCT managers like Murray, Close and Downing who manage several VCT funds and have access to wider management resources. Often the same managers will manage several VCT funds.

But more so than with other retail fund, VCTs each have a unique flavour.

Take the generalist VCT on current offer from Close Bros.

Fund manager Ole Bettum explains: "We are looking to invest into established and fast-growing firms across very broad business sectors. Average investment size will be around £750,000, some of them in equity and some of them in secured debt. This means that we can provide

development capital with reduced risk - although, of course, if a company becomes insolvent, we rank behind any bank which may have lent them money."

Because VCTs are set up to run over a five-year minimum term, none have yet matured. It's also very difficult to know whether you have lost or gained within this term. VCT shares can be traded like any other, but few have come on the market. Those that do often trade at a big discount, but now most of the larger VCT providers have started to buy back any such shares, pushing their value up.

Martin Churchill of Allenbridge Securities has some clear advice for anyone tempted to invest into a VCT: "The track record of the managers - whether they have a history of finding small companies and investing to help them grow - is vitally important when deciding where to invest."

Venture Capital Trusts on offer

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Twenty years ago, if you wanted to get into electronic music and recording, you would probably have required an extension to the house, a silly amount of cash and an army of neighbourhood nerds to counsel you through the trauma of daring to plug the gear in. Now, though the posh end of the market still offers some bewilderingly complex and expensive equipment, the ever-decreasing cost of digital technology has created a wealth of affordable music-making gadgets at the more "domestic" end - and so given bedroom noodlers and strummers the chance to create polished recordings of their musical dreams.

And when that earth-shattering tune hits you, there's no need to wait until home-time to get working on your latest opus. All of the equipment here is portable - even pocket-sized - and ranges from simple recording devices to capture a quick tune to complete studios in miniature. Whether you're after a bit of "giving-it-up-large-style" at 200 beats per minute, or just putting down a few ideas for your four-week opera cycle, these tools should help you to compose yourself.

If you really want to put Abbey Road into your pocket (musicians, mixing desk and all), the Yamaha QY70 Music Sequencer will weigh you down about as much as a Rolf Harris Stylophone. Somewhere inside this box you'll find 519 "voices" (sounds and instruments), 20 drum kits; a range of effects to add such things as reverb, echo and distortion and a brain that can remember up to 32,000 notes of music - the "sequencer". If you need a little stylistic help along the way, a database of over 4,000 professional examples, such as drum patterns, bass lines and chord progressions, can be fitted into your songs. If you have a tune but no chords to go with it, there are also automatic composing features that can help fill in any gaps you have left.

Tunes can be built up part by part, adding a layer at a time; then, rather than a word processor, you can chop them up and rearrange them at will. Pieces can then also be saved on to an ordinary Mac or PC home computer through a connecting lead. You

can't exactly do a Shine performance on the tiny keyboard, but then it's pretty hard to compose at a grand piano and get to work at the same time.

Great artists steal, apparently, and if you fancy doing a bit of a Fat Boy Slim and pinching bits of other people's music to mix up for yourself, you need a sampler such as the Yamaha SU10. A sampler essentially listens to a sound that you play - perhaps from a CD or a microphone - remembers it (in digital form) and then allows you to play around by changing its pitch, stretching it to make it last longer, playing it backwards, looping and so on. So, instead of using the sounds of "instruments" that are pre-stored, it uses whatever you feed it to play music with. The higher the sampling "rate", the more faithful the reproduction, and the rate for this unit is 44.1kHz, which is CD quality. So to create a piece with the sound of your mum sneezing, next door's car alarm, and a quick snippet of the James Bond theme (Robbie Williams got away with it), this is the box to use. An optional extra mini-piano keyboard is available to make playing a little more convenient and, like the QY70, it offers a sequencer to remember the patterns you create.

The trusty cassette four-track has been around for years - and may seem a bit geriatric in the face of newer digital devices - but it still offers a cheap way into multi-track recording. Standard cassettes have room for four tracks on the tape, and on an ordinary stereo cassette player two tracks are used at a time to create a stereo recording. When you turn the tape over and play the other side, you hear the recording on the other two tracks, with the tape running in the opposite direction.

A four-track (such as the budget Fostex X14) uses the same ordinary cassettes, but employs all four tracks at once. Plug in a microphone (or use the built-in mic) and you can record your warbling on track one, then listen back to it while recording the pots and pans on track two. That done, you can listen to both those tracks and add your third part, and so on. With the slightly more expensive models, such as the X-24, you can also "bounce down" - once you have filled three tracks, you can

take all that music and put it onto track 4 and start the process again. When you have finished, you can plug the machine into an ordinary stereo cassette recorder and make a stereo final "mix" that will play on a standard machine.

If you just want to mumble a quick

tune so you don't forget it later on, when you come to develop it into a

symphony, there are plenty of "notetaking" devices on the market, from recording Walkmans and dictaphones to high quality recordable Minidiscs. After all, Beethoven got a fair bit of mileage from one tiny idea for the opening of his Fifth Symphony (something like: "da-da-dummm").

If sound quality isn't a primary

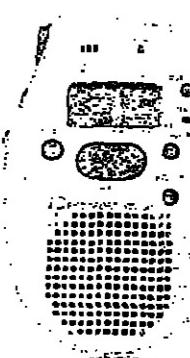
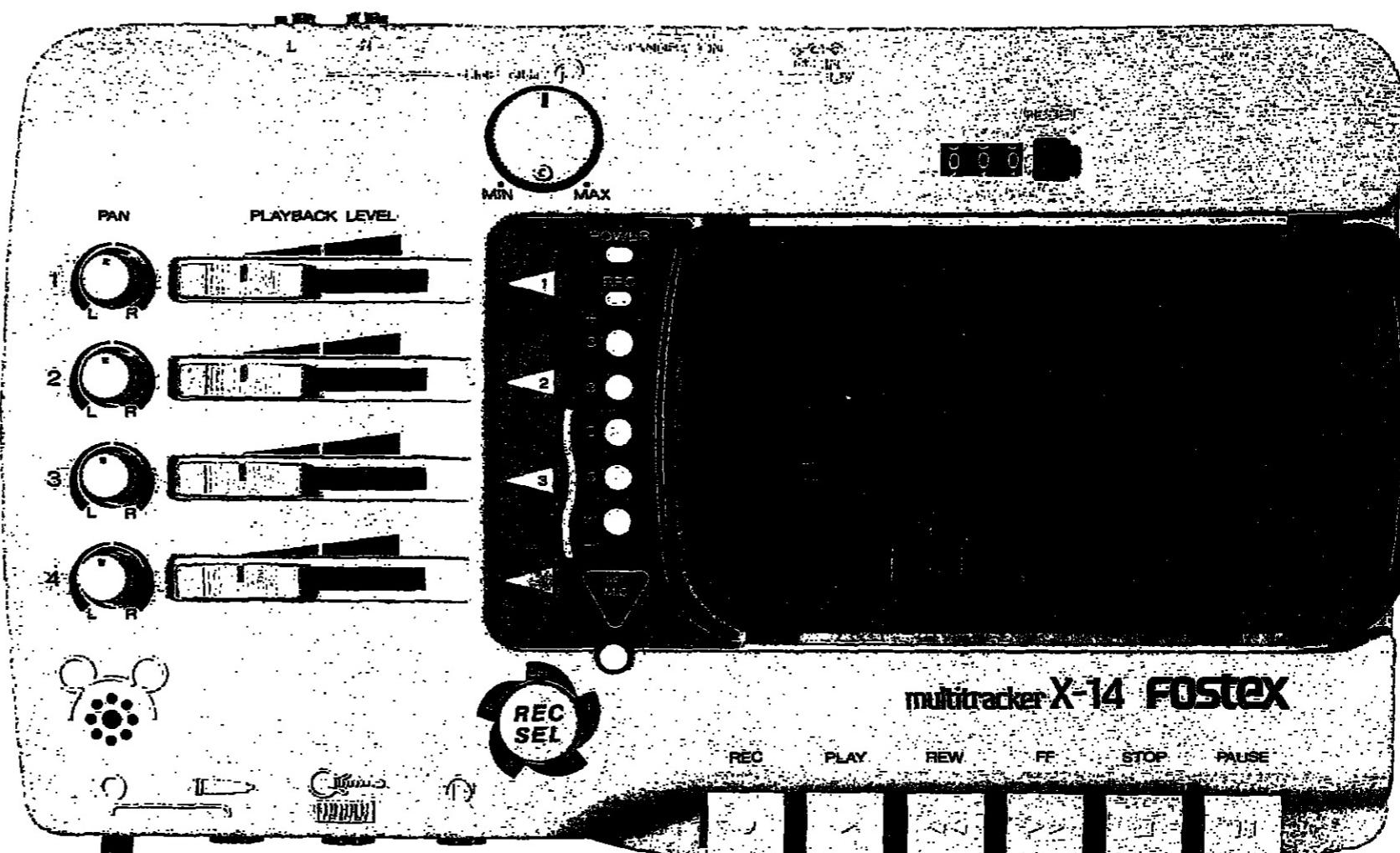
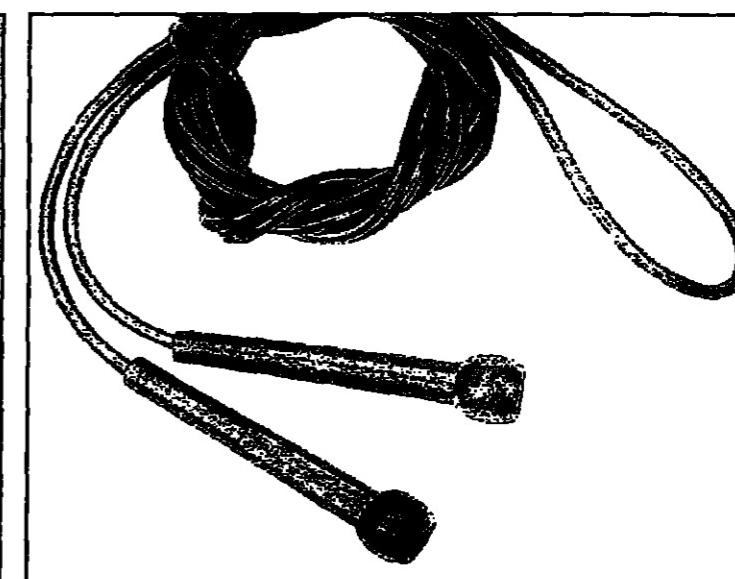
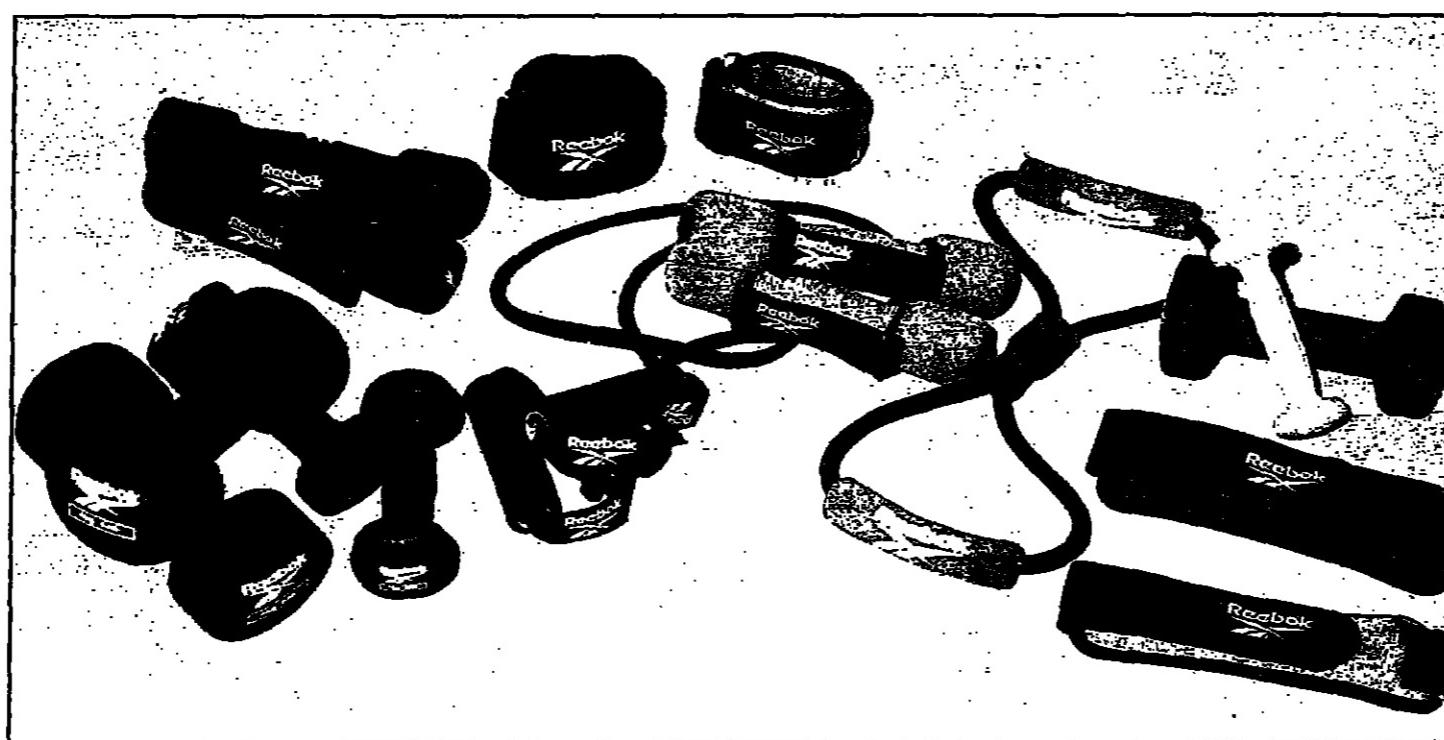
concern, but portability is, the Sony ICD30 offers a notetaker that uses no cassettes or discs, with computer memory to store up to eight minutes of sound in a palm-sized unit. It has two message files which hold up to 99 separate snippets, with facilities for skip through and repeat playing.

Alternatively, if all that mixing,

a bit too serious, you could invest in a Funrise Double Step-a-tune Electronic floor keyboard. A bit like playing Twister on a piano, it has 16 keys, Rock, Disco, Rap and Dance rhythms, six demo songs, and a record/playback function. Great for "Bad" Michael Jackson impressions and it'll double up as a picnic mat when the batteries go flat.

And she shall have music wherever she goes: the Fostex X14 cassette four-track, £120, Turnkey (0171-419 9999), top; the Funrise floor keyboard, £30, Hamleys (0171 494 2000), far left; the Yamaha QY70 Music Sequencer, £400, Turnkey (0171-419 9999), left; the Sony ICD30 notetaker, around £99, (0990 111999 for nearest Sony dealers), below.

PASCAL WYSE

CHECK IT OUT
PORTABLE FITNESS EQUIPMENT

Jump all year round with the jump rope, above, £14, and other items in the range of Reebok portable fitness equipment, above left, that start at around £10. For mail order and enquiries contact Reebok on 01865 886300

IT'S ALL too easy to backslide from that shiny new year's resolution to go to the gym. The excuses are legion: I'm too tired... the gym's too full... I'll go tomorrow (which has to be the very worst). However, what if your resolve is rock solid and circumstances conspire against you and your good intentions?

Business, travel, family demands and holidays can wreak havoc on the most determined of regimes, so if you cannot get to the gym, the gym must come to you. After all, personal trainers do just that. What's needed is training equipment that is easy to throw into a bag, doesn't cost a fortune and can be transported wherever you go.

Soft foam dumbbells (from £5.95 for two 0.5kg weights) in strong primary colours, and mini foam-covered hand weights with elastic straps (from £1.95 for two 0.5kg weights) are excellent value from the mail-order company Energy Express. Its resistance bands and ankle/wrist weights are also very competitively priced.

Physical Company, a mail-order supplier of fitness equipment, stocks one of the widest ranges of goods around - certainly far wider than you'd find in any large sports store. Its clear and informative catalogue is well worth checking out.

Gold's Gym describes its products as "serious home-fitness equipment". A measure of this seriousness is that its Figure Flex Bands (£19.99) are sold with an instructional video to demonstrate the correct

workout technique. Essential if my experience testing flex bands blind is anything to go by.

Reebok has a range of Fitness Rings and Resistance Tubes in its new portable fitness range - which also includes Ankle/Wrist Weights, Hand Weights, Soft Grip Dumbbells ("Strength Reebok"), Leather Jump Ropes and Speed Ropes ("Jump

Reebok") and an exercise mat ("Stretch Reebok").

Each piece of equipment comes with detailed instructions, and Reebok has designed an overall training scheme featuring four goals (lose weight, improve muscle tone, increase flexibility, enhance overall health and fitness) and three fitness levels, enabling you to choose a train-

ing level that suits you and, with luck, helps motivation by developing the workout as you get fitter.

This is attractive equipment in bright funky colours - no pastel nonsense here. I felt sportier immediately just by looking at it. One gripe is that the workout notes don't contain any diagrams to demonstrate clearly the correct technique

for the individual exercises. After battling for some while to interpret the Fitness Rings' (£12.95) instructions, I retired hurt to take a very early bath.

In contrast, skipping with Reebok's Leather Jump Rope is a breeze. It builds cardiovascular conditioning and endurance, tones the upper body, improves your hand, eye

and foot co-ordination and agility, and jumping up and down helps to build strong bones and so prevent osteoporosis. Phew!

Not bad for £14.95 - and the instruction notes assume that most of us haven't skipped (with a rope) since primary school. Forget that other childhood craze - where's the fun in an intelligent yo-yo? Skipping

is the thing. You can skip wherever you happen to be, it's cheap, and most importantly, it's fun.

DIONA GREGORY

Stockists: Energy Express: 01604 832 843 (or e-mail: Nexpress@aol.com); Gold's Gym: 01925 522400; The Physical Company: 01628 520208; Reebok: 01865 886300 for mail order

Subaru's latest is a class act at a competitive price. By Roger Bell

Impressive legacy

Subaru is not the force it should be in Britain. But for quota restraints on Japanese imports, it would sell more cars. Quota restraints? Here, still, in a free market? They linger on, at least until the year 2000, as a remnant of the (failed) government policy to attempt to protect Rover in the Seventies.

Without restrictions, Subaru says it could import 2.0-litre versions of the new third-generation Legacy, as well as the 2.5 tested here. "Subaru's quota is not big enough to accommodate all the new derivatives," says Ed Swatman, Subaru UK's managing director. That's why the old US-sourced 2.0 Legacy, now badged Classic, is still being sold. "Quota restrictions prevent us from offering the latest technology," laments Swatman, who describes the quota system bypassed by grey imports that may not satisfy European Type Approval standards as "anti-competitive, unfair and unjust".

Although its sales may be artificially suppressed, Subaru is riding high, not least because of the cult status afforded to the brilliant rally-bred Impreza Turbo, the thinking man's performance car (for which there's a seven-month waiting list). However, Subaru's reputation was founded on tough, practical cars like the Legacy estate.

Although its lines echo those of the old model, the skin is all new. Subaru's two specialities – all-wheel drive and a Porsche-like "boxer" engine – serve the new Legacy well. Performance is well up to scratch, although noise from the engine, which is characteristically throbbing at low revs, intrudes when pressing on. The manual gearbox has an excellent shift, the smooth-changing automatic, a Merc-like selector.

While not a serious off-roader, the Legacy can reach parts that ordinary cars can't, thanks to terrific traction and low-range crawler gears (manual only). Extra ground clearance is provided by the bush, tall-tired Outback derivative without compromising handling – good enough to satisfy fast, fastidious drivers, despite having slightly mushy steering. In a comprehensive belt-



The Subaru Legacy reaches parts that ordinary cars can't

SPECIFICATIONS

Make and model: Subaru Legacy estate, from £20,800 on the road.

BMW 520i Touring, £26,380. Lovely car; silly money – even for the cheapest. Six-pot engine more refined than roomier Subaru's "four". No 4x4.

Transmission: five-speed manual gearbox, high and low range (or four-speed auto without low range), all-wheel drive. Performance: max speed 126mph, 0-60mph in 8.9sec.

RIVALS

Audi A6 1.8T Avant, £24,541. Not the biggest estate for the money, but one of the best and most attractive.

BMW 520i Touring, £26,380. Lovely car; silly money – even for the cheapest. Six-pot engine more refined than roomier Subaru's "four". No 4x4.

Mercedes-Benz E200 estate, £27,845. Cheapest E has four-cylinder engine, indifferent performance. Cheapest six is £3,000 more. Daft price. No 4x4.

Volvo T70 2.5t AWD, £28,555. Bigger, roomier; faster than the Legacy – and much pricier, too.

VW Passat Syncro, £25,085. All-wheel drive Passat is

Legacy estate's closet rival.

More expensive, but V6 engine powerful and refined.

and-braces approach to safety, all-wheel drive is augmented by traction control on the uprange automatic models, making wheel-spin and skidding virtually impossible to induce.

Inside, Subaru stick with a more conventional approach, preferring to impress with quality materials rather than high-tech design innovation. With considerable comfort, too, judging by the smooth ride and supportive seats.

New space-saving rear suspension and a lengthened wheelbase give even more room than pricier German rivals like the Audi A6 Avant and BMW 5-series Touring, which the Subaru handsomely undercuts. If you can't afford a comparable Audi Quattro, the Subaru won't disappoint you as a cheaper, worthy substitute.

PRODRIVE IS a very Nineties company. Its offices contain few tones other than white, grey and blue. People talk of "best practice", "world class" and "turnkey", and many nouns have become verbs.

This is how the language of business works nowadays. It's a way of thinking which makes it hard to have a fuzzy outlook, however much it grates with lovers of language. Prodrive is clear and focused; when you drive past it on the M40 by Banbury, the buildings seem almost to be surrounded by a crisp halo.

But what is it? A driving school? A maker of high-tech golf clubs? Neither. Prodrive is an automotive and motor-sport engineering and marketing consultancy, a beacon for Britain's hidden motor industry. It designs things for car and motorcycle makers, distributes parts for competition cars, designs and builds the competition cars themselves, and invents new ways of doing familiar things. And it runs Subaru's rally team, the most successful of the past decade. This year it will also run Ford's campaign for the British Touring Car Championship.

Last year Prodrive ran Honda's BTCC team. Previously it has run BMWs and Alfa Romeos. Why those deals ended tells you a lot about the company that David Richards, a former accountant and world rally championship-winning navigator (he won in 1981, sharing a Ford Escort with Ari Vatanen), set up with commercial director Ian Parry 14 years ago.

"At the beginning of the Nineties, we realised that engineering was the core of what we were doing," says Richards. "We'd developed our skills through motor sport, which called for ingenuity and motivational skills within tight budgets and time constraints. If we could apply this to mainstream engineering, we would have a unique operation."

Richards is Dave within motor sport's mateness; David as a businessman; DR within the company. He took over the running of the Benetton Formula One team a season ago, replacing the mysterious Flavio Briatore, and pledging a new,



Looking up: Prodrive

open management style. Benetton wouldn't sell, but maybe we could work together and solve the management problems. And part of my own ego wanted to prove I could do something different. When I arrived, Briatore asked how long he should stay for the handover: I said, until lunchtime."

Late last summer, however, Richards and Benetton parted. The Benetton family didn't like Richards'

'Motor sport calls for ingenuity and skills, within tight budgets and time constraints'

vision of the future, and installed 29-year-old Rocco Benetton as chief executive instead. There's speculation that Richards might return to Formula One, possibly with Ford's backing and a mission to revive the stagnating Stewart-Ford team and run it under the Ford-owned Jaguar banner. Such a deal would tie in well with the Ford Mondeo BTCC effort.

Which brings us back to the split with Honda. Prodrive prefers to run the whole racing operation, developing the cars and "interfacing" with the manufacturer's marketing

organisation. Honda and Alfa Romeo were not willing to relinquish control, favouring a piecemeal approach which only came together in the Alfa or Honda headquarters. "This is not the right way to succeed," says Richards. "When you have different people doing different things, there's no accountability."

The integrated approach brought Subaru the World Rally Championship for three years in succession, only for Mitsubishi to break Subaru's grip in last year's Network Q Rally of Great Britain.

Motor sport is just one of the £50m-turnover company's three divisions, the other two being sales and engineering. Trying to understand how it works is puzzling.

The engineering division, with roomfuls of informed engineers, is where the most secrets lie. Try to probe, and the PR man will say that he's "struggling with the transparency of our engineering projects". So we talk generalities: a batch of six complete prototype cars, an electric steering rack design, a sequential rally-car transmission, a two-stroke racing engine evaluation, body-styling kits to help spice-up an ageing product, suspension re-designs, innovative transmissions and electronic control systems, and a great deal else.

The work can be done for manufacturers or for component suppliers, and can be done quickly. "There must be engineering integrity in everything we do," insists Richards. "We've bridged the gap between modern management practices and motor sport, and we've broken the back of engineering credibility." And the future? "We'll either align ourselves with one manufacturer, or develop each area of the business independently. The important thing is to stop it getting too big."

For all his business speak, though, Dave Richards still loves motor sport. "I'm thinking of building a lightweight Aston Martin DB4 for historic events, not too expensive because I'll probably crash it a lot. And Ari and I borrowed our Escort rally car from the Beaulieu museum for a month in the summer."

THE RAC Rally is Britain's most popular spectator sporting event. I define popular as being watched, live, by spectators – although the way many rally spectators behave, it is a wonder that many of them stay alive for very long. On last year's RAC Rally, more than two million people came, saw and were captivated.

I have just returned from the Monte Carlo Rally, the world's most famous rally. As with the RAC, most spectators watch by finding their way to out-of-the-way rural places and then see their heroes blast by in a splash of colour and engine noise and tyre squeak and turbo whistle. And then pack up and move onto the next stage.

Top rally men are probably the world's greatest drivers. They have to drive at breakneck speeds down narrow, unknown roads, for three or four days, testing their speed, precision and endurance. Ask most Brits to name this country's best driver and most would plump for Damon Hill or David Coulthard. I would say they are probably wrong.

Our best is Colin McRae, 1995 world rally champion, and currently the world's pre-eminent driver. His lack of widespread public recognition in this country is bordering on a national shame. McRae's following is probably largest among kids who play "Colin McRae Rally" on their Sony

PlayStations. Their dads, scanning the sports pages of the national newspapers or watching the TV news, will find the Scot largely ignored.

He was at his brilliant best at this year's Monte Carlo Rally. Two fastest times on the very first day of the rally in a brand-new and largely untested rally car, the new Ford Focus WRC, is a mark of greatness. McRae went on to score two more fastest times, before finishing third overall.

Mind you, he had a bit of a problem with the crowd. A photographer friend relayed how he ran slightly wide on the exit of one hairpin bend. The tail of his car clipped a spectator who, foolishly, was standing on the

GAVIN GREEN
You may not have heard too much about him, but Colin McRae – the 1995 world rally champion – is Britain's finest driver

outside of the corner. The man fell, causing 10 or so people standing next to him also to fall, domino-like. The first chap was okay although his leg must now have an almighty bruise.

I watched one of the first-day stages from a hairpin between Gap and Sisteron, high in the mountains behind the French Riviera. Like most of the spectators I arrived about two hours before McRae and mates came storming through. I stood high, well away from the line of a spinning rally car, yet hundreds of spectators stood on the outside of the bend, unprotected by any crash barrier. An official car, sweeping the course before the first rally car arrived, urged the spectators, by loud speaker,

to leave the outside of the bend. The spectators, in turn, assailed the car with snowballs, boozing loudly. Few moved. Those who did immediately returned to their vantage points when the official car left.

A half hour or so later, a helicopter joined in the entreaty for people to leave their spots. It too was snowballed and, soon after, flew off in disgust and to great mocking cheers from the fans.

It was the most marvellous spectacle, as these cars sped down that narrow, slippery, snow-bordered D-road at impossibly high speeds, engine screams bouncing off the pine trees and the snowy banks, drivers' arms flailing

energetically, spectators cheering and blowing klaxons and waving national flags.

If you haven't been to a top-flight international rally, I really would urge you to do so. Watch McRae and Mäkinen and Sainz and Britain's new young star, Richard Burns, and marvel at the men who are probably the best wheelmen in the world, driving superfast cars that, unlike F1 machines, at least look like the sort of vehicles that you and I use everyday.

Join in one of the world's most popular but under-reported, sporting events! But don't double as a crash barrier. Otherwise, you may get rather closer to Colin McRae than you'd had in mind.

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SE7 EAH	1,520	45 PCL	270	29 JUN	2,000	PPB 29	2,250
SD4 5AH	2,200	72 F	280	29 JUN	2,000	PPB 30	1,400
CA 657	2,650	72 F	280	29 JUN	2,000	PPB 31	3,000
SD7 5LX	2,650	72 F	280	29 JUN	2,000	PPB 32	5,200
CDE 947V	2,650	72 F	280	29 JUN	2,000	PPB 33	5,200
SD7 5LX	2,650	72 F	280	29 JUN	2,000	PPB 34	5,200
SD7 5LX	2,650	72 F	280	29 JUN	2,000	PPB 35	5,200
SD7 5LX	2,650	72 F	280	29 JUN	2,000	PPB 36	5,200
SD7 5LX	2,650	72 F	280	29 JUN	2,000	PPB 37	5,200
SD7 5LX	2,650	72 F	280	29 JUN	2,000	PPB 38	5,200
SD7 5LX	2,650	72 F	280	29 JUN	2,000	PPB 39	5,200
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PROPERTY

Make the right move for your future career

If your company asks you to relocate, it may pay for the move, but it can't stop the stress. By Fiona Brandhorst

Being asked to relocate by their employer is, for some people, the chance to move house and be paid for the pain and the pleasure. In reality, the strain and stress of moving is still there, bringing with it unexpected problems.

Jeff and Inger Deere left London 10 years ago for Brighton, when Jeff was promoted and the recession was gaining ground. A fairly good relocation package paid for all the moving expenses, and they bought a large house on the edge of the South Downs.

Five years later when Jeff's company decided to relocate their head office to Leicester, he was given the option to move north. This time the company offered to buy the Deeres' house to enable them to purchase a new property without the potential problems of being caught in a chain. "Two valuations were obtained on the basis of achieving a quick sale," says Jeff.

"The market was poor in 1995. We'd paid £200,000 for our house in 1990 and spent £20,000 on it. After the valuations we were offered just £177,000. While we were given a generous relocation bonus, it only just about matched the amount we'd lost on the house."

And it wasn't only the recession that had an effect on house prices in their area. Jeff's company was a major employer and the number of properties being offered for sale at that time was distorting the market.

According to Jeff and Inger, the worst experience was trying to buy a house within an hour's commuting distance from the new office in Leicester. "We were moving to a completely new area, and having to house hunt for six months at weekends, as we were both working and I was still living in the south," says Inger. This time they were also looking for a suitable school for their daughter.

"We found that property prices in the Midlands hadn't slumped as

Craig Vassie, a partner at The Relocation Bureau, never underestimates the level of support required by his clients, many of whom are coming to work in the UK from overseas. "We'll do whatever it takes to make the trailing spouse, male or female, feel at home, even if it means taking them to the local Tesco." In his experience, Americans are keen to get the right house, whereas the British put their children's schooling first.

Multinational companies like Glaxo Wellcome have detailed relocation packages in place. Carol Moore is their relocation adviser, and deals with up to 250 employee relocations a year, both within the UK and internationally. The majority of these employees have a property to sell, and Glaxo Wellcome cover all the costs involved in the sale, and purchase of a new home. This service is out-sourced to a relocation company who arranges the marketing of the existing property through local estate agents.

In some cases, Glaxo Wellcome will guarantee to buy the property from the employee at an agreed price to enable the sale to proceed quickly. Help is also given to find a new house. "I have a one-to-one briefing with each person and provide them with maps and guides of the area surrounding the relocation zone," says Ms Moore.

Expert education and partner employment consultants are also made available. "We are very much aware of these relocations being



Geoff and Inger Deere and their daughter found a string of relocations a strain on family life

News Team

Firms still relocate staff, but there seems to be a general reluctance, especially involving families

much as in the South, and we just couldn't afford to buy a similar property," adds Jeff. "We were looking for a house on the edge of a reasonably sized town, and actually bought a new house in a village which we are very happy with."

Jeff admits that the real sting of relocation is the effect it has on family life, having to start again with each move, and the time taken to rebuild your personal network. Inger is in no doubt that the enforced job breaks have ruined her own career as a systems analyst.

family moves and the need to keep everyone happy," adds Ms Moore. To further cushion expenses, a one-off lump sum of 10 per cent of the employee's salary is paid to meet the costs of redecoration and furnishings in the new home.

David and Caroline Middleton seized the opportunity to relocate from north London to Denver, Colorado, for two years with David's telecommunications employer. The Middletons rented their two-bedroom flat overlooking a London park and moved to an unfurnished four-bedroom modern executive home with a view of the Rocky Mountains. David's employer paid for shipping costs and the services of a relocation agent.

"We had no idea about areas, but she quickly sussed out our tastes and needs," says David. Their arrival with two young children, in the middle of winter, five weeks before their furniture, meant they had to hire a sofa, bed, cots and even linen.

"Getting credit was a huge problem until we got a security number," remembers Caroline. "As far as they were concerned, we had no credit history and even a guarantee from David's employer meant nothing." David and Caroline were also left to discover for themselves the intricacies of car leasing and the private health system.

On their return to England, just over a year ago, they choose to relocate to Harrogate in Yorkshire,

spending 12 weeks in two freezing holiday cottages while they looked for a house to buy. An allowance from David's company covered the cottage rentals and the cost of leasing a car, but not the services of a relocation company.

Finding a property proved difficult. "We were told by estate agents that there were hundreds of people looking for the same type of property and many were renting like us, so we were in a good position to move," adds Caroline.

They finally settled on a five-bedroom detached Fifties property in need of considerable work, but with a large garden and in the right part of town. "Having lived in America, we were more accepting of a

modern house - space is more important to us now than character."

Employers will continue to relocate staff, but the general trend seems to suggest reluctance on both sides, especially where families are involved. The Nationwide Building Society employs just over 12,000 people and has seen the number of its own relocations decrease over the past 10 years: to around 70 employees a year. Denise Walker has written the Nationwide's guide for the relocation of its staff. "It's a very costly exercise, and years of moving around the country is no longer necessarily a significant factor in someone's career."

The Relocation Bureau: 01444 816650



Thanks to the Internet, it took Jayne Mitchell and her husband a matter of hours early one morning to decide they wanted to buy a flat

Neville Elder

Househunters slip through the net

Buying a property on the Internet is becoming more popular, but there are still snags. By Penny Jackson

IT WAS at six o'clock in the morning that Jayne Mitchell came across a flat in an old canal-side factory she knew well. By the end of breakfast, she and her husband had collected more details, done their sums and were on the phone to the agents the moment they opened. Another Internet sale was about to be clocked up.

"I was looking for the right person to sell our Hampstead flat and was reviewing the estate agents' websites. This flat tweaked my interest because I had been aware of the conversion a few years ago. We were idly thinking of buying something smaller that we could lock up and leave, but we hadn't made up our minds. As it is, we have been sold a flat we didn't know we wanted," says Jayne Mitchell.

In the past two years, since properties first started to appear on the Internet, long-distance purchase is a major selling point. The browser from San Francisco who spots a cottage in Farnham generates more publicity than the buyer who moves a mile down the road. But increasingly, those using the Internet are local to the estate agents. They visit a website just as they might pop into a sales office.

Jayne Mitchell runs a head-hunting business and, like many people, regards the prospect of looking for a new home as time-consuming and stressful. "That is why it is wonderful to come across our flat by chance. But I doubt it would have happened if I hadn't chosen an agent from the area." Her chosen location formed a triangle that cut through at least five different London postcodes. "That would have meant a slow and complicated search because I did not have a clearly identifiable area. I would never have found the flat if I had started the search from scratch."

As it was, she chose the Goldschmidt & Howland site for its search facility, and after having seen pictures and printed details of the flat, she was certain that it was worth viewing. "I knew the building, and that was important. There was no way I could have found it by asking for flats on a canal with a terrace. As a seller; though, I still have my doubts. Maybe there's a price barrier. I know too many people in top jobs who never even switch on their own computers, let alone surf the Internet. I think that anyone with a lot of money to spend is more likely to

choose a more personal approach."

At Knight Frank, where they are used to secretaries asking for details on behalf of their bosses, deals of up to £2m have nevertheless been done on the Internet. A man who bought a Surrey house at that price lived two miles away, but spotted it while in the Middle East. Richard Crosthwaite

is not unconnected to the frustration of wading through unsuitable details and a suspicion they might not be at the top of an agent's list. The growth of homefinding services is testimony to that. It is of particular help for anyone trying to track down new developments where regional information can be notoriously difficult to come by at the head office.

The Internet does not necessarily make things simpler. Only as agents upgrade their websites are browsers able to refine their searches. Agents would rather cover a wide area thinly than be excluded from somewhere quite specific. In London, for instance, Winkworth, which has some 2,500 properties on its Internet site, is able to give precise locations, with virtual viewings in some cases, whereas a company with only a few properties in London would appear on a search, but not in useful detail. It is the duplication of material and numerous red herrings that put off the less persistent.

Nicholas Leeming, sales director of the Internet Property Finder, an "umbrella" site, finds that, with some notable exceptions, estate agents are not good at making the most of new tech-

nology. "People come into sites to find a property - not to read corporate guff. They want a prominent search facility with varying layers of detail, not just one level of information."

Apparently, most of us do our searching on Mondays and Tuesdays, reaching a peak on Wednesdays. Searches on the IPF system are running at an all-time high at about 12,000 a day, double December's figures. Two thousand visitors a day are now visiting the database, up from 900 last month.

Despite the figures, some may need more convincing. Robert Wayne, of agents Wayne & Silver who are selling Jayne Mitchell's three bedroom flat, is not a believer. "I have yet to find anything I am looking for. Our properties do appear on the Internet, but I've only sold one. Personal recommendation and service still count for more. But I could change my mind." Maybe if Jayne Mitchell's flat becomes his second Internet success.

Wayne & Silver: 0171 431 2258; www.goldschmidt-howland.co.uk; www.propertyfinder.co.uk; www.winkworth.co.uk

STEPPING STONES ONE WOMAN'S PROPERTY STORY



Jenny: "I got through homes like men" Glyn Griffiths

SINCE 1972 Jenny Owen has bought at least six properties. She now lives in a garden flat in Richmond, Surrey.

Jenny first bought a small maisonette off the A4 in Newbury in Berkshire. "I was 28 and in love." She lost the man after he left, "taking my heart but not my money". Just three months later, when she sold for £9,500.

In the next 10 years Jenny remembers "getting through homes like men". She can't recall exact details, as the moves were too frequent, but they included "a ghastly town house in Bracknell" and a "beautiful derelict cottage" in Sunninghill which she renovated. Happily each move brought profits and by 1982 Jenny was working in the West End. She bought a flat in Teddington for £40,000 which she sold for £90,000 three years later.

After spending £25,000 on renovation, her flat is now worth £250,000. Jenny believes she has inherited her mother's penchant for moving; and in spite of her Docklands experience - where "other people made money, not me" - thinks she has done reasonably well "through luck, not judgement".

GINETTA VEDRICKAS

Those moves in brief... February 1972 - bought starter maisonette for £6,050, sold for £9,300 in May.

1972-82 - bought several properties including Bracknell town house and Sunninghill cottage, all sold with small profits.

1982 - bought Teddington flat for £40,000, sold for £90,000.

1985 - bought Docklands flat and parking space for £157,000, sold for £130,000 in 1995.

1997 - bought Richmond basement for £175,000, now worth around £250,000.

If you would like your moves to be featured, write to: Nic Cicuti, Stepping Stones, One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL. £100 will be awarded for the best story.

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Still, in a remnant meat policy Rover in the

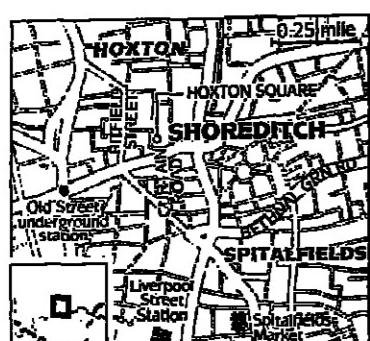
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Welcome to Shoreditch. Welcome to Hoxton. And say hello again to spillover, the latest Hot Spot Hot Word. Clerkenwell rejects settle for Shoreditch, which has been warming up for some time now, and its northerly neighbour Hoxton.

The area is getting spillover from another direction as well. "Central Islington rents have dramatically increased, and people are being pushed toward Shoreditch and Hoxton," says Susan Horrex, the director of Halesmere, a lettings agency. She notes that many of her clients "want to live as close to Old Street as possible, but there is not much residential property except for Shoreditch and Hoxton".

Scarcity didn't deter one group of men who were strongly attracted to the area. They commissioned the loft pioneers Manhattan Loft to convert a warehouse for their own residential use. The building is actually large enough to contain 50 units. Now near-

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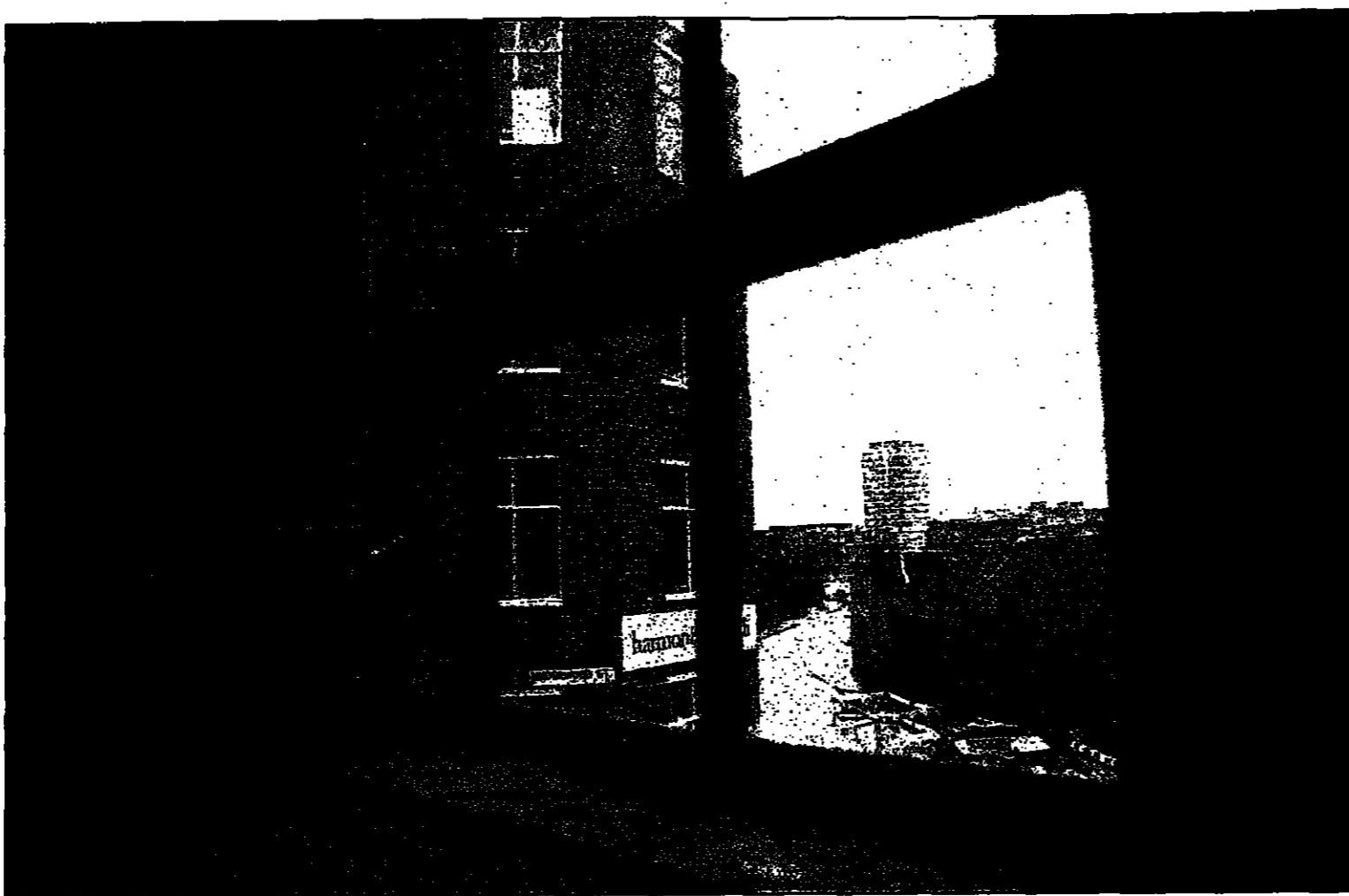


IN THE City seriously modern office blocks contain workers who deal in billions of pounds daily without actually darkening their palms with cash. But the EC2 part of the City, the section that Christopher Wren missed, is another story. The buildings are grim and grey, traffic is non-stop, the air is heavy with particles, and trees are a distant memory. Old Street roundabout looks as if it took 10 hard punches for every one it threw. Only its mother could possibly love Commercial Street.

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Room with a view... the Manhattan Lofts conversion in Shoreditch

Neville Elder

ing completion, 46 of these have already been sold.

The building's name, the Factory, pays homage to Andy Warhol's New York loft, and Manhattan Lofts supremo Harry Handelsman believes that "the triangle, which is the land between Clerkenwell, Islington and Shoreditch, is becoming London's TriBeCa, the newest creative district in Manhattan." In the Big Apple, TriBeCa designates the Triangle



Below Canal Street. "The Ditcherati", as they are called, are the new colonisers of the area, according to James Goff, the managing director of Stirling Ackroyd. "We get inquiries from the bohemian set, City people, as well as an odd sprinkling of couples whose children have left the nest. The market is strong in live/work units, and this area is popular with graphic designers, artists, architects and photographers." The

area already has plenty of bars and restaurants, and supermarkets are appearing to meet growing demand.

Overall, Shoreditch is more salubrious than Hoxton and any spillover within this area goes from the former to the latter. But Daniel Derbyshire, of Felicity J Lord estate agents, notes that "Hoxton Square is quite expensive, so some people who live in Shoreditch say they live in Hoxton". ROBERT LIEBMAN

Prices: Typical of loft prices in the area generally, the Factory's price range is £125-£250,000, the latter for penthouses with enormously high, arched ceilings. Otherwise small flats are available for under £75,000, especially if they are ex-council or need work.

Properties: St George is awaiting

planning permission to construct a 48-unit (12 of which are reserved for social housing) new-build in Hoxton Square. Stirling Ackroyd will soon start marketing a 28-unit Columbia Estates new-build on Curtain Road which should be completed by the summer. Mr Goff says that Copthorn Homes is also looking to develop Pittfield Street.

Rentals: Halesmere's Ms Horrex notes that "rental demand is still high despite recent turmoil in the banking sector. Those upheavals affect sales more than rentals."

Transport: Zone 1 is cheap as well as convenient for all central-London travel. Docklands and City Airport are nearby, and Liverpool Street Station

provides a fast rail link through to Stansted Airport.

Shoreditch and Hoxton in history: Hoxton is mentioned in the Domesday Book, Ben Jonson successfully fought a duel in Hoxton Square, and Margaret Roberts became Margaret Thatcher in Wesley's Chapel on City Road. Hoxton Hall Theatre is the only

original music hall still being used as a performance venue.

Council tax: Hackney's Band A is £526, and Band B is £1,579.

Estate agents: Halesmere Lettings (0171-226 2956); Felicity J Lord (0171-251 9449); Stirling Ackroyd (0171-729 7763).

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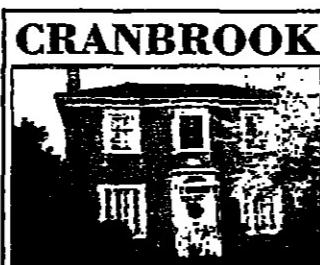
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